


# TRAILS OF THE PATHFINDERS



GEORGE BIRD GRINNELL



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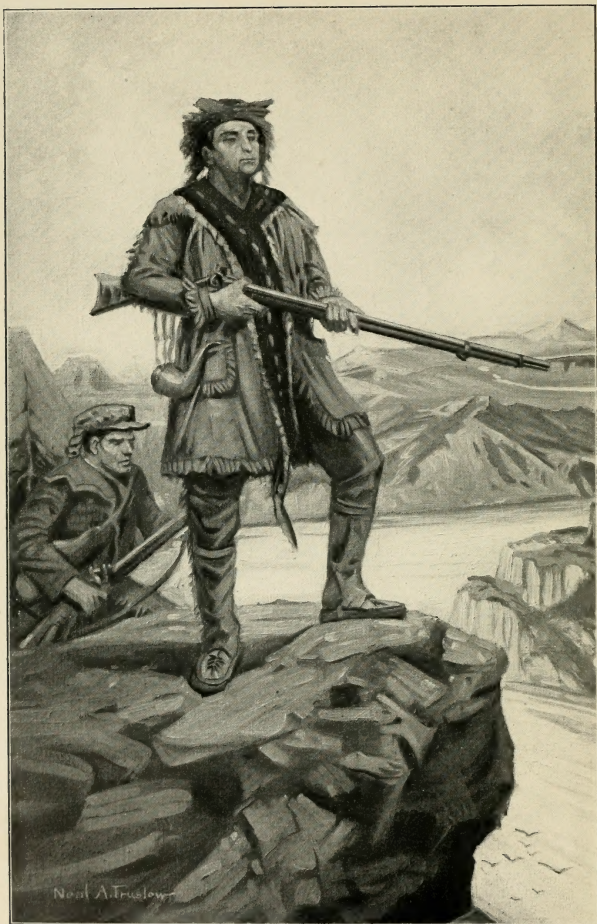
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CAPTAINS LEWIS AND CLARK WERE MUCH PUZZLED AT THIS POINT TO KNOW WHICH OF THE RIVERS BEFORE THEM WAS THE MAIN MISSOURI.

# TRAILS OF THE PATHFINDERS

BY

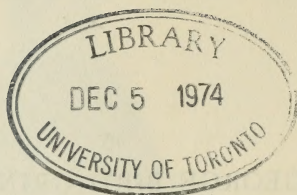
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ILLUSTRATED

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## PREFACE

THE chapters in this book appeared first as part of a series of articles under the same title contributed to *Forest and Stream* several years ago. At the time they aroused much interest and there was a demand that they should be put into book form.

The books from which these accounts have been drawn are good reading for all Americans. They are at once history and adventure. They deal with a time when half the continent was unknown; when the West—distant and full of romance—held for the young, the brave and the hardy, possibilities that were limitless.

The legend of the kingdom of El Dorado did not pass with the passing of the Spaniards. All through the eighteenth and a part of the nineteenth century it was recalled in another sense by the fur trader, and with the discovery of gold in California it was heard again by a great multitude—and almost with its old meaning.

Besides these old books on the West, there are many others which every American should read. They treat of that same romantic period, and describe the adventures of explorers, Indian fighters, fur hunters and fur traders. They are a part of the history of the continent.

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TRAILS OF THE PATHFINDERS



# TRAILS OF THE PATHFINDERS

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THREE centuries ago half a dozen tiny hamlets, peopled by white men, were scattered along the western shores of the North Atlantic Ocean. These little settlements owed allegiance to different nations of Europe, each of which had thrust out a hand to grasp some share of the wealth which might lie in the unknown wilderness which stretched away from the sea-shore toward the west.

The "Indies" had been discovered more than a hundred years before, but though ships had sailed north and ships had sailed south, little was known of the land, through which men were seeking a passage to share the trade which the Portuguese, long before, had opened up with the mysterious East. That passage had not been found. To the north lay ice and snow, to the south—vaguely known—lay the South Sea. What that South Sea was, what its limits, what its relations to lands already visited, were still secrets.

St. Augustine had been founded in 1565; and forty years later the French made their first settlement at

Port Royal in what is now Nova Scotia. In 1607 Jamestown was settled; and a year later the French established Quebec. The Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts in 1620 and the first settlement of the Dutch on the island of Manhattan was in 1623. All these settlers establishing themselves in a new country found enough to do in the struggle to procure subsistence, to protect themselves from the elements and from the attacks of enemies, without attempting to discover what lay inland—beyond the sound of the salt waves which beat upon the coast. Not until later was any effort made to learn what lay in the vast interior.

Time went on. The settlements increased. Gradually men pushed farther and farther inland. There were wars; and one nation after another was crowded from its possessions, until, at length, the British owned all the settlements in eastern temperate America. The white men still clung chiefly to the sea-coast, and it was in western Pennsylvania that the French and Indians defeated Braddock in 1755, George Washington being an officer under his command.

A little later came the war of the Revolution, and a new people sprang into being in a land a little more than two hundred and fifty years known. This people, teeming with energy, kept reaching out in all directions for new things. As they increased in numbers they spread chiefly in the direction of least resistance. The native tribes were easier to displace than the French, who held forts to the north, and the Spanish, who possessed territory to the south; and the temperate climate

toward the west attracted them more than the cold of the north or the heat of the south. So the Americans pushed on always to the setting sun, and their early movements gave truth to Bishop Berkeley's famous line, written long before and in an altogether different connection, "Westward the course of empire takes its way." The Mississippi was reached, and little villages, occupied by Frenchmen and their half-breed children, began to change, to be transformed into American towns. Yet in 1790, ninety-five per cent. of the population of the United States was on the Atlantic seaboard.

Now came the Louisiana Purchase, and immediately after that the expedition across the continent by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The trip took two years' time, and the reports brought back by the intrepid explorers, telling the wonderful story of what lay in the unknown beyond, greatly stimulated the imagination of the western people. Long before this it had become known that the western ocean—the South Sea of an earlier day—extended north along the continent, and that there was no connection here with India. It was known, too, that the Spaniards occupied the west coast. In 1790, Umfreville said: "That there are European traders settled among the Indians from the other side of the continent is without doubt. I, myself, have seen horses with Roman capitals burnt in their flanks with a hot iron. I likewise once saw a hanger with Spanish words engraved on the blade. Many other proofs have been obtained to convince us

that the Spaniards on the opposite side of the continent make their inland peregrinations as well as ourselves."

Western travel and exploration, within the United States, began soon after the return of Lewis and Clark. The trapper, seeking for peltry—the rich furs so much in demand in Europe—was the first to penetrate the unknown wilds; but close upon his heels followed the Indian trader, who used trapper and Indian alike to fill his purse. With the trapper and the trader, naturalists began to push out into the west, studying the fauna and flora of the new lands. About the same time the possibilities of trade with the Mexicans induced the beginnings of the Santa Fé trade, that Commerce of the Prairies which has been so fully written of by the intrepid spirits who took part in it. Meantime the government continued to send out expeditions, poorly provided in many ways, scarcely armed, barely furnished with provisions, without means of making their way through the unknown and dangerous regions to which they were sent, but led by heroes.

For forty years this work of investigation went on; for forty years there took place a peopling of the new West by men who were in very deed the bravest and most adventurous of our brave and hardy border population. They scattered over the plains and through the mountains; they trapped the beaver and fought the Indian and guided the explorers; and took to themselves wives from among their very enemies, and raised up broods of hardy offspring, some of whom we



may yet meet as we journey through the cattle and the farming country which used to be the far West.

If ever any set of men played their part in subduing the wilderness, and in ploughing the ground to receive its seed of settlement, and to rear the crop of civilization which is now being harvested, these men did that work, and did it well. It is inconceivable that they should have had the foresight to know what they were doing; to imagine what it was that should come after them. They did not think of that. Like the bold, brave, hardy men of all times and of all countries, they did the work that lay before them, bravely, faithfully, and well, without any special thought of a distant future; surely without any regrets for the past. As the years rolled by, sickness, battle, the wild beast, starvation, murder, death in some form, whether sudden or lingering, struck them down singly or by scores; and that a man had been "rubbed out," was cause for a sigh of regret or a word of sorrow from his companions, who forthwith saddled up and started on some journey of peril, where their fate might be what his had been.

At the end of forty years the first series of these exploratory journeys came to an end. Gold was discovered in California. The Mexican War took place. This was not unexpected, for in the Southwest, about the pueblos of Taos and Santa Fé, skirmishings and quarrels between the Spanish-Indian inhabitants and the rough mountaineers and teamsters from the States had already given warning of a conflict soon to come.

Now, well travelled wagon roads crossed the continent, and a stream of westward immigration that seemed to have no end. Before long there came Indian wars. The immigrants imposed upon the savages, ill-treated their wives, and were truculent and over-bearing to their men. The Indians stole from the immigrants, and drove off their horses. Then began a season of conflict which, by one tribe and another, yet with many intermissions, lasted almost down to our own day. For the most part, these Indian wars are well within the memory of living men. They have been told of by those who saw them and were a part of them.

Of the travellers who marched westward over the arid plains, during the period which intervened between the return of Lewis and Clark and the establishment of the old California trail, and of the earlier northmen who trafficked for the beaver in Canada, a few left records of their journeys; and of these records many are most interesting reading, for they are simple, faithful narratives of the every-day life of travellers through unknown regions. To Americans they are of especial interest, for they tell of a time when one-half of the continent which now teems with population had no inhabitants. The acres which now contribute freely of food that supplies the world; the mountains which now echo to the rattle of machinery, and the shot of the blasts which lay bare millions worth of precious metal; the waters which are churned by propeller blades, transporting all the varied products of the land to their mar-

kets; the forests, which, alas! in too many sections, no longer rustle to the breeze, but have been swept away to make room for farms and town sites—all these were then undisturbed and natural, as they had been for a thousand years. Of the travellers who passed over the vast stretches of prairie or mountain or woodland, many saw the possibilities of this vast land, and prophesied as to what might be wrought here, when, in the dim and distant future, which none could yet foresee, settlements should have pushed out from the east and occupied the land. Other travellers declared that these barren wastes would ever prove a barrier to westward settlement.

The books that were written concerning this new land are mostly long out of print, or difficult of access; yet each one of them is worth perusal. Of their authors, some bear names still familiar, even though their works have been lost sight of. Some of them made discoveries of great interest in one branch or other of science. At a later day some attained fame. Parkman's first essay in literature was his story of *The California and Oregon Trail*, a fitting introduction to the many fascinating volumes that he contributed later to the early history of America; while in Washington Irving, historian and essayist, was found a narrator who should first tell connectedly of the fur trade of the Northwest, and the adventures of Bonneville.

Besides the books that were published in those times, there were also written accounts, usually in the form of diaries, or of notes kept from day to day of the hap-

penings in the life of this or that individual, which are full of interest, because they give us pictures of one or another phase of early travel, or hunting adventures, or of trading with the Indians. Such private and personal accounts, never intended for the public eye, are to-day of extreme interest; and it is fortunate that an American student, the late Dr. Elliott Coues, has given us volumes which tell the stories of Lewis and Clark, Pike and Garces, of Jacob Fowler, of Alexander Henry the younger, and of Charles Larpenteur—contributions to the history of the winning of the greater West whose value is only now beginning to be appreciated.

The chapters that follow contain much of history which is old, but which, to the average American, will prove absolutely new. One may imagine himself very much interested in the old West, familiar with its history and devoted to its study, but it is not until he has gone through volume after volume of this ancient literature that he realizes how greatly his knowledge lacks precision and how much he still has to learn concerning the country he inhabits.

The work that the early travellers did, and the books they published, showed to the people of their day the conditions which existed in the far West, caused its settlement, and led to the slow discovery of its mineral treasures, and the slower appreciation of its possibilities to the farmer and stock-raiser. Each of these volumes had its readers, and of the readers of each we may be sure that a few, or many, attracted by the graphic descriptions of the new land, determined that they, too,

would push out into it; they, too, would share in the wealth which it spread out with lavish hand.

It is all so long ago that we who are busy with a thousand modern interests care little about who contributed to the greatness of the country which we inhabit and the prosperity which we enjoy. But there was a day, which men alive may still remember, a day of strong men, of brave women, hardy pioneers, and true hearts, who ventured forth into the wilderness, braving many dangers that were real, and many more that were imaginary and yet to them seemed very real, occupied the land, broke up the virgin soil, and peopled a wilderness.

How can the men and women of this generation—dwellers in cities, or in peaceful villages, or on smiling farms—realize what those pioneers did—how they lived? He must have possessed stern resolution and firm courage, who, to better the condition of those dearest to him, risked their comfort—their very lives—on the hazard of a settlement in the unknown wilderness. The woman who accompanied this man bore an equal part in the struggle, with devoted helpfulness encouraging him in his strife with nature or cheering him in defeat. If the school of self-reliance and hardihood in which their children were reared gave them little of the lore of books, it built strong characters and made them worthy successors of courageous parents. We may not comprehend how long and fierce was the struggle with the elements, with the bristling forest, with the unbroken soil; how hard and wearing the

annoyance of wild beasts, the anxiety as to climate, the fear of the prowling savage. Yet the work was done, and to-day, from the Alleghanies to the Pacific, we behold its results.

Through hard experience these pioneers had come to understand life. They possessed a due sense of proportion. They saw the things which were essential; they scorned those which were trivial. If, judged by certain standards, they were rough and uncouth, if they spoke a strange tongue, wore odd apparel, and lived narrow lives, they were yet practising—albeit unconsciously—the virtues—unflinching courage, sturdy independence and helpfulness to their neighbors—which have made America what it is.

In the work of travel and exploration in that far West of which we used to read, the figure which stands out boldest and most heroic of all is unnamed. Bearded, buckskin-clad, with rough fur cap, or kerchief tied about his head, wearing powder-horn and ball-pouch, and scalping-knife, and carrying his trusty Hawkins rifle, the trapper—the *coureur des bois*—was the man who did the first work in subduing the wild West, the man who laid the foundations on which its present civilization is built.

All honor to this nameless hero. We shall meet him often as we follow the westward trail.



## CHAPTER II

### ALEXANDER HENRY

#### I

THE fur trade, which occupied many worthy men during the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, forms a romantic and interesting part of the early history of our country.

The traders, usually of English and American parentage, associated themselves with the French voyageurs, or *coureurs des bois*, whom Masson describes as "those heroes of the prairie and forest, regular mixtures of good and evil, extravagant by nature, at the same time grave and gay, cruel and compassionate; as credulous as superstitious, and always irreligious." Traders and voyageurs alike suffered every privation, the cold of winter, the heat of summer, and finally, by incredible persistence, beat out the path of discovery during all seasons, until it became a well-worn trail; all to penetrate the great unknown, which might contain everything that the trader desired. The man who lived in those times and under those conditions was brave and enduring without trying to be; he was alert and quick to act, and unwearying in overcoming obstacles.

Viewing him from the present day, we might call him cruel and without feeling; but in those times men were taught not to show their feelings. Their lives were given in great part to surmounting enormous difficulties of travel in unknown regions, and to establishing trade relations with unknown tribes of Indians, who often times were not disposed to be friendly. The fur trader was in constant danger, not only from hostile Indians, but often from starvation.

Alexander Henry was one of these fur traders. He came upon the scene just at the close of the French régime. At twenty-one he had joined Amherst's army, not as a soldier, but in "a premature attempt to share in the fur trade of Canada, directly on the conquest of the country." Wolfe's victory at Quebec in the previous year had aroused the English traders to the opportunity presented of taking over the fur trade which the French had opened up, and Amherst's large army was watched with great interest as it swept away the last remnant of French control. Henry was well fitted for the life that he intended to pursue, for he seems to have had knowledge of the trading posts of Albany and New York.

On the 3d day of August, 1761, Henry despatched his canoes from Montreal to Lachine on an expedition to the regions west of the Great Lakes. Little did he realize then that he should be gone from civilization for sixteen years; that he should suffer and want but survive; should see new and strange peoples, discover rivers and lakes, build forts, to be used by others who

were to follow him, trade with the natives, and finally return to hear of the capture of Quebec by the Americans, and then go to France to tell of his adventures.

The route of the expedition was the usual one. Almost immediately after leaving Lachine they came to the broad stretch of Lake Saint Louis. At St. Anne's the men used to go to confession, as the voyageurs were almost all Catholics, and at the same time offered up their vows; "for the saint from which this parish derives its name, and to whom its church is dedicated, is the patroness of the Canadians in all their travels by water." "There is still a further custom to be observed on arriving at Saint-Anne's," Henry relates, "which is that of distributing eight gallons of rum to each canoe for consumption during the voyage; nor is it less according to custom to drink the whole of this liquor upon the spot. The saint, therefore, and the priest were no sooner dismissed than a scene of intoxication began in which my men surpassed, if possible, the drunken Indian in singing, fighting, and the display of savage gesture and conceit."

Continuing up the river, and carrying over many portages, they at last reached the Ottawa, and soon ascended the Mattawa. Hitherto the French were the only white men that had been known in this region. Their relations with the Indians were friendly, and the Indians were well aware of the enmity existing between the French and the English. In the Lac des Chats Henry met several canoes of Indians returning from their winter hunt. They recognized him as an Englishman, and

cautioned him, declaring that the upper Indians would kill him when they saw him, and said that the Englishmen were crazy to go so far after beaver. The expedition came at last to Lake Huron, which "lay stretched across our horizon like an ocean." It was, perhaps, the largest water Henry had yet seen, and the prospect was alarming, but the canoes rode with the ease of a sea-bird, and his fears subsided. Coming to the island called La Cloche, because "there is here a rock standing on a plain, which, being struck, rings like a bell," he found Indians, with whom he traded, and to whom he gave some rum, and who, recognizing him as an Englishman, told his men that the Indians at Michilimackinac would certainly kill him. On the advice of his friend Campion, Henry changed his garb, assuming the dress usually worn by the Canadians, and, smearing his face with dirt and grease, believed himself thoroughly disguised.

Passing the mouth of the river Missisaki, he found the Indians inhabiting the north side of Lake Superior cultivating corn in small quantities.

As he went on, the lake before him to the westward seemed to become less and less broad, and at last he could see the high back of the island of Michilimackinac, commonly interpreted to mean the great turtle. He found here a large village of Chippewas, and leaving as soon as possible, pushed on about two leagues farther to the fort, where there was a stockade of thirty houses and a church.

For years now Fort Michilimackinac had been a

scene of great activity. Established by Father Marquette, and kept up by succeeding missionaries, the first men to brave the unknown terrors of the interior, it was from here in 1731 that the brave and adventurous Verendryes set out on their long journey to the Forks of the Saskatchewan, and to the Missouri River.

This was the half-way house for all the westward pushing and eastward coming traders, and a meeting place for all the tribes living on the Great Lakes. Here were fur traders, trappers, voyageurs, and Indians, hurrying to and fro, dressed in motley and picturesque attire. Some were bringing in furs from long and perilous journeys from the west, while others were on the eve of departure westward, and others still were leaving for Montreal. The scene must have been gay and active almost beyond our powers to imagine. Henry was in the midst of all this when the word came to him that a band of Chippewas wished to speak with him; and, however unwillingly, he was obliged to meet them, sixty in number, headed by Minavavana, their chief. "They walked in single file, each with a tomahawk in one hand and scalping-knife in the other. Their bodies were naked from the waist upward, except in a few examples, where blankets were thrown loosely over the shoulders." Their faces were painted with charcoal, their bodies with white clay, and feathers were tied in the heads of some, and thrust through the noses of others. Before the opening of the council, the chief held a conference with Campion, asking how long it was since Henry had left Montreal, and observing that the Eng-

lish must be brave men and not afraid of death, since they thus ventured to come fearlessly among their enemies. After the pipe had been smoked, while Henry "inwardly endured the tortures of suspense," the chief addressed him, saying:

"Englishman, our father, the King of France, employed our young men to make war upon your nation. In this warfare many of them have been killed; and it is our custom to retaliate, until such time as the spirits of the slain are satisfied. But the spirits of the slain are to be satisfied in either of two ways: the first is by the spilling of the blood of the nation by which they fell; the other, by *covering the bodies of the dead*, and thus allaying the resentment of their relations. This is done by making presents.

"Englishman, your King has never sent us any presents, nor entered into any treaty with us, wherefore he and we are still at war; and, until he does these things, we must consider that we have no other father nor friend among the white men than the King of France; but, for you, we have taken into consideration that you have ventured your life among us, in the expectation that we should not molest you. You do not come armed, with an intention to make war; you come in peace, to trade with us, and supply us with necessities, of which we are in much want. We shall regard you, therefore, as a brother, and you may sleep tranquilly, without fear of the Chippewas. As a token of our friendship, we present you with this pipe to smoke."



In reply, Henry told them that their late father, the King of France, had surrendered Canada to the King of England, whom they should now regard as their father, and that he, Henry, had come to furnish them with what they needed. Things were thus very satisfactory, and when the Chippewas went away they were given a small quantity of rum.

Henry was now busily at work assorting his goods, preparatory to starting on his expedition, when two hundred Ottawas entered the fort and demanded speech with him. They insisted that he should give credit to every one of their young men to the amount of fifty beaver skins, but as this demand would have stripped him of all his merchandise, he refused to comply with the request. What the Ottawas might have done is uncertain. They did nothing, because that very day word was brought that a detachment of English soldiers, sent to garrison the fort, was distant only five miles, and would be there the next day. At daybreak the Ottawas were seen preparing to depart, and by sunrise not one of them was left in the fort.

Although it was now the middle of September, the traders sent off their canoes on the different trading expeditions. These canoes were victualled largely with Indian corn at the neighboring village of L'Arbre Croche, occupied by the Ottawas. This corn was prepared for use by boiling it in a strong lye which removed the husk, after which it was pounded and dried, making a meal. "The allowance for each man on the voyage is a quart a day, and a bushel, with two pounds

of prepared fat, is reckoned to be a month's subsistence. No other allowance is made of any kind, not even of salt, and bread is never thought of. The men, nevertheless, are healthy, and capable of performing their heavy labor. This mode of victualling is essential to the trade, which, being pursued at great distances, and in vessels so small as canoes, will not admit of the use of other food. If the men were to be supplied with bread and pork, the canoes could not carry a sufficiency for six months; and the ordinary duration of the voyage is not less than fourteen."

The food of the garrison consisted largely of small game, partridges and hares, and of fish, especially trout, whitefish, and sturgeon. Trout were caught with set lines and bait, and whitefish with nets under the ice. Should this fishery fail, it was necessary to purchase grain, which, however, was very expensive, costing forty livres, or forty shillings, Canadian currency; though there was no money in Michilimackinac, and the circulating medium consisted solely of furs. A pound of beaver was worth about sixty cents, an otter skin six shillings Canadian, and marten skins about thirty cents each.

Having wintered at Michilimackinac, Henry set out in May for the Sault de Sainte-Marie. Here there was a stockaded fort, with four houses, one of which was occupied by Monsieur Cadotte, the interpreter, and his Chippewa wife. The Indians had an important whitefish fishery at the rapids, taking the fish in dip nets. In the autumn Henry and the other whites did much



fishing; and in the winter they hunted, and took large trout with the spear through the ice in this way: "In order to spear trout under the ice, holes being first cut of two yards in circumference, cabins of about two feet in height are built over them of small branches of trees; and these are further covered with skins so as to wholly exclude the light. The design and result of this contrivance is to render it practicable to discern objects in the water at a very considerable depth; for the reflection of light from the water gives that element an opaque appearance, and hides all objects from the eye at a small distance beneath its surface. A spear head of iron is fastened on a pole of about ten feet in length. This instrument is lowered into the water, and the fisherman, lying upon his belly, with his head under the cabin or cover, and therefore over the hole, lets down the figure of a fish in wood and filled with lead. Round the middle of the fish is tied a small pack thread, and, when at the depth of ten fathoms, where it is intended to be employed, it is made, by drawing the string and by the simultaneous pressure of the water, to move forward, after the manner of a real fish. Trout and other large fish, deceived by its resemblance, spring toward it to seize it, but, by a dexterous jerk of the string, it is instantly taken out of their reach. The decoy is now drawn nearer to the surface, and the fish takes some time to renew the attack, during which the spear is raised and held conveniently for striking. On the return of the fish, the spear is plunged into its back, and, the spear being barbed, it is easily drawn out

of the water. So completely do the rays of the light pervade the element that in three-fathom water I have often seen the shadows of the fish on the bottom, following them as they moved; and this when the ice itself was two feet in thickness."

The burning of the post at the Sault forced all hands to return next winter to Michilimackinac, where the early spring was devoted to the manufacture of maple sugar, an important article of diet in the northern country.

That spring Indians gathered about the fort in such large numbers as to make Henry fearful that something unusual lay behind the concourse. He spoke about it to the commanding officer, who laughed at him for his timidity. The Indians seemed to be passing to and fro in the most friendly manner, selling their fur and attending to their business altogether in a natural way.

About a year before an Indian named Wawatam had come into Henry's house, expressed a strong liking for him, and, having explained that years before, after a fast, he had dreamed of adopting an Englishman as his son, brother, and friend, told Henry that in him he recognized the person whom the Great Spirit had pointed out to him for a brother, and that he hoped Henry would become one of his family, and at the same time he made him a large present. Henry accepted these friendly overtures, and made a handsome present in return, and the two parted for the time.

Henry had almost forgotten his brother, when, on the second day of June, twelve months later, Wawatam

again came to his house and expressed great regret that Henry had returned from the Sault. Wawatam stated that he intended to go there at once, and begged Henry to accompany him. He asked, also, whether the commandant had heard bad news, saying that during the winter he himself had been much disturbed by the noises of evil birds, and that there were many Indians around the fort who had never shown themselves within it. Both the chief and his wife strove earnestly to persuade Henry to accompany them at once, but he paid little attention to their requests, and they finally took their departure, very much depressed—in fact, even weeping. The next day Henry received from a Chippewa an invitation to come out and see the great game of baggatiway, or lacrosse, which his people were going to play that day with the Sacs. But as a canoe was about to start for Montreal, Henry was busy writing letters, and although urged by a friend to go out and meet another canoe just arrived from Detroit, he nevertheless remained in his room, writing. Suddenly he heard the Indian war-cry, and, looking out of the window, saw a crowd of Indians within the fort furiously cutting down and scalping every Englishman they found. He noticed, too, many of the Canadian inhabitants of the fort quietly looking on, neither trying to stop the Indians nor suffering injury from them; and from the fact that these people were not being attacked, he conceived the hope of finding security in one of their houses. This is as he tells it:

“Between the yard-door of my own house and that

of M. Langlade, my next neighbor, there was only a low fence, over which I easily climbed. At my entrance I found the whole family at the windows, gazing at the scene of blood before them. I addressed myself immediately to M. Langlade, begging that he would put me into some place of safety until the heat of the affair should be over, an act of charity by which he might perhaps preserve me from the general massacre; but, while I uttered my petition, M. Langlade, who had looked for a moment at me, turned again to the window, shrugging his shoulders and intimating that he could do nothing for me—*‘Que voudriez-vous que j’en ferais?’*

“This was a moment for despair; but the next a Pani woman, a slave of M. Langlade’s, beckoned to me to follow her. She brought me to a door, which she opened, desiring me to enter, and telling me that it led to the garret, where I must go and conceal myself. I joyfully obeyed her directions and she, having followed me up to the garret door, locked it after me, and with great presence of mind took away the key.

“This shelter obtained, if shelter I could hope to find it, I was naturally anxious to know what might still be passing without. Through an aperture which afforded me a view of the area of the fort, I beheld, in shapes the foulest and most terrible, the ferocious triumphs of barbarian conquerors. The dead were scalped and mangled; the dying were writhing and shrieking under the unsatiated knife and tomahawk, and, from the bodies of some ripped open, their butchers were drinking the

blood, scooped up in the hollow of joined hands and quaffed amid shouts of rage and victory. I was shaken, not only with horror, but with fear. The sufferings which I witnessed, I seemed on the point of experiencing. No long time elapsed before every one being destroyed who could be found, there was a general cry of 'All is finished!' At the same instant I heard some of the Indians enter the house in which I was.

"The garret was separated from the room below only by a layer of single boards, at once the flooring of the one and the ceiling of the other. I could therefore hear everything that passed; and, the Indians no sooner in than they inquired whether or not any Englishmen were in the house? M. Langlade replied that 'He could not say—he did not know of any'—answers in which he did not exceed the truth, for the Pani woman had not only hidden me by stealth, but had kept my secret and her own; M. Langlade was therefore, as I presume, as far from a wish to destroy me as he was careless about saving me, when he added to these answers that 'They might examine for themselves, and would soon be satisfied as to the object of their question.' Saying this, he brought them to the garret door.

"The state of my mind will be imagined. Arrived at the door, some delay was occasioned by the absence of the key, and a few moments were thus allowed me in which to look around for a hiding place. In one corner of the garret was a heap of vessels of birch-bark, used in maple-sugar making.

"The door was unlocked, and opening, and the Ind-

ians ascending the stairs, before I had completely crept into a small opening which presented itself at one end of the heap. An instant after four Indians entered the room, all armed with tomahawks, and all besmeared with blood upon every part of their bodies.

"The die appeared to be cast. I could scarcely breathe: but I thought that the throbbing of my heart occasioned a noise loud enough to betray me. The Indians walked in every direction about the garret, and one of them approached me so closely that at a particular moment, had he put forth his hand, he must have touched me. Still, I remained undiscovered, a circumstance to which the dark color of my clothes and the want of light, in a room which had no window, and in the corner in which I was, must have contributed. In a word, after taking several turns in the room, during which they told M. Langlade how many they had killed and how many scalps they had taken, they returned down-stairs, and I with sensations not to be expressed heard the door, which was the barrier between me and fate, locked for the second time.

"There was a feather bed on the floor, and on this, exhausted as I was by the agitation of my mind, I threw myself down and fell asleep. In this state I remained till the dusk of the evening, when I was awakened by a second opening of the door. The person that now entered was M. Langlade's wife, who was much surprised at finding me, but advised me not to be uneasy, observing that the Indians had killed most of the English, but that she hoped I might myself escape. A



shower of rain having begun to fall, she had come to stop a hole in the roof. On her going away, I begged her to send me a little water to drink, which she did.

“As night was now advancing, I continued to lie on the bed, ruminating on my condition but unable to discover a resource from which I could hope for life. A flight to Detroit had no probable chance of success. The distance from Michilimackinac was four hundred miles; I was without provisions, and the whole length of the road lay through Indian countries, countries of an enemy in arms, where the first man whom I should meet would kill me. To stay where I was threatened nearly the same issue. As before, fatigue of mind and not tranquillity, suspended my cares and procured me further sleep. . . .

“The respite which sleep afforded me during the night was put an end to by the return of morning. I was again on the rack of apprehension. At sunrise I heard the family stirring, and, presently after, Indian voices, informing M. Langlade that they had not found my hapless self among the dead, and that they supposed me to be somewhere concealed. M. Langlade appeared, from what followed, to be by this time acquainted with the place of my retreat, of which, no doubt, he had been informed by his wife. The poor woman, as soon as the Indians mentioned me, declared to her husband, in the French tongue, that he should no longer keep me in his house, but deliver me up to my pursuers; giving as a reason for this measure that should the Indians discover his instrumentality in my

concealment they might revenge it on her children, and that it was better that I should die than they. M. Langlade resisted at first this sentence of his wife's; but soon suffered her to prevail, informing the Indians that he had been told I was in his house; that I had come there without his knowledge, and that he would put me into their hands. This was no sooner expressed than he began to ascend the stairs, the Indians following upon his heels.

"I now resigned myself to the fate with which I was menaced; and regarding every attempt at concealment as vain, I arose from the bed and presented myself full in view to the Indians who were entering the room. They were all in a state of intoxication, and entirely naked, except about the middle. One of them, named Wenniway, whom I had previously known and who was upward of six feet in height, had his entire face and body covered with charcoal and grease, only that a white spot of two inches in diameter encircled either eye. This man, walking up to me, seized me with one hand by the collar of the coat, while in the other he held a large carving knife, as if to plunge it into my breast; his eyes, meanwhile, were fixed steadfastly on mine. At length, after some seconds of the most anxious suspense he dropped his arm, saying, 'I won't kill you!' To this he added that he had been frequently engaged in wars against the English, and had brought away many scalps; that, on a certain occasion, he had lost a brother, whose name was Musingon, and that I should be called after him."





"I NOW RESIGNED MYSELF TO THE FATE WITH WHICH I WAS  
MENACED."



Several times within the next two or three days Henry had narrow escapes from death at the hands of drunken Indians; but finally his captors, having stripped him of all his clothing save an old shirt, took him, with other prisoners, and set out for the Isles du Castor, in Lake Michigan.

At the village of L'Arbre Croche, the Ottawas forcibly took away their prisoners from the Chippewas, but the Chippewas made violent complaint, while the Ottawas explained to the prisoners that they had taken them from the Chippewas to save their lives, it being the practice of the Chippewas to eat their enemies, in order to give them courage in battle. A council was held between the Chippewas and Ottawas, the result of which was that the prisoners were handed over to their original captors. But before they had left this place, while Henry was sitting in the lodge with his captor, his friend and brother, Wawatam, suddenly entered. As he passed Henry he shook hands with him, but went toward the great chief, by whom he sat down, and after smoking, rose again and left the lodge, saying to Henry as he passed him, "Take courage."

A little later, Wawatam and his wife entered the lodge, bringing large presents, which they threw down before the chiefs. Wawatam explained that Henry was his brother, and therefore a relative to the whole tribe, and asked that he be turned over to him, which was done.

Henry now went with Wawatam to his lodge, and thereafter lived with him. The Indians were very much

afraid that the English would send to revenge the killing of their troops, and they shortly moved to the Island of Michilimackinac. A little later a brigade of canoes, containing goods and abundant liquor, was captured: and Wawatam, fearing the results of the drink on the Indians, took Henry away and concealed him in a cave, where he remained for two days.

The head chief of the village of Michilimackinac now recommended to Wawatam and Henry that, on account of the frequent arrival of Indians from Montreal, some of whom had lost relatives or friends in the war, Henry should be dressed like an Indian, and the wisdom of this advice was recognized. His hair was cut off, his head shaved, except for a scalp-lock, his face painted, and Indian clothing given him. Wawatam helped him to visit Michilimackinac, where Henry found one of his clerks, but none of his property. Soon after this they moved away to Wawatam's wintering ground, which Henry was very willing to visit, because in the main camp he was constantly subjected to insults from the Indians who knew of his race.

Henry writes fully of the customs of the Indians, of the habits of many of the animals which they pursued, and of the life he led. He says that during this winter "Raccoon hunting was my more particular and daily employ. I usually went out at the first dawn of day, and seldom returned till sunset, or till I had laden myself with as many animals as I could carry. By degrees I became familiarized with this kind of life; and had it not been for the idea, of which I could not divest

my mind, that I was living among savages, and for the whispers of a lingering hope that I should one day be released from it, or if I could have forgotten that I had ever been otherwise than as I then was, I could have enjoyed as much happiness in this as in any other situation."

Among the interesting hunting occurrences narrated is one of the killing of a bear, and of the ceremonies subsequent to this killing performed by the Indians. He says:

"In the course of the month of January I happened to observe that the trunk of a very large pine tree was much torn by the claws of a bear, made both in going up and down. On further examination, I saw that there was a large opening in the upper part, near which the smaller branches were broken. From these marks, and from the additional circumstance that there were no tracks in the snow, there was reason to believe that a bear lay concealed in the tree.

"On returning to the lodge, I communicated my discovery, and it was agreed that all the family should go together in the morning to assist in cutting down the tree, the girth of which was not less than three fathom. Accordingly, in the morning we surrounded the tree, both men and women, as many at a time as could conveniently work at it, and here we toiled like beaver till the sun went down. This day's work carried us about half way through the trunk; and the next morning we renewed the attack, continuing it till about two o'clock in the afternoon, when the tree fell to the ground. For

a few minutes everything remained quiet, and I feared that all our expectations were disappointed; but, as I advanced to the opening, there came out, to the great satisfaction of all our party, a bear of extraordinary size, which, before she had proceeded many yards, I shot.

“The bear being dead, all my assistants approached, and all, but more particularly my old mother (as I was wont to call her), took her head in their hands, stroking and kissing it several times, begging a thousand pardons for taking away her life; calling her their relation and grandmother, and requesting her not to lay the fault upon them, since it was truly an Englishman that had put her to death.

“This ceremony was not of long duration, and if it was I that killed their grandmother, they were not themselves behindhand in what remained to be performed. The skin being taken off, we found the fat in several places six inches deep. This, being divided into two parts, loaded two persons, and the flesh parts were as much as four persons could carry. In all, the carcass must have exceeded five hundredweight.

“As soon as we reached the lodge, the bear’s head was adorned with all the trinkets in the possession of the family, such as silver arm-bands and wrist-bands, and belts of wampum, and then laid upon a scaffold set up for its reception within the lodge. Near the nose was placed a large quantity of tobacco.

“The next morning no sooner appeared than preparations were made for a feast to the manes. The lodge

was cleaned and swept, and the head of the bear lifted up and a new stroud blanket, which had never been used before, spread under it. The pipes were now lit, and Wawatam blew tobacco smoke into the nostrils of the bear, telling me to do the same, and thus appease the anger of the bear on account of my having killed her. I endeavored to persuade my benefactor and friendly adviser that she no longer had any life, and assured him that I was under no apprehension from her displeasure; but the first proposition obtained no credit, and the second gave but little satisfaction.

“At length, the feast being ready, Wawatam commenced a speech, resembling, in many things, his address to the manes of his relations and departed companions, but having this peculiarity, that he here deplored the necessity under which men labored thus to destroy their friends. He represented, however, that the misfortune was unavoidable, since without doing so they could by no means subsist. The speech ended, we all ate heartily of the bear’s flesh, and even the head itself, after remaining three days on the scaffold, was put into the kettle.

“It is only the female bear that makes her winter lodging in the upper parts of trees, a practice by which her young are secured from the attacks of wolves and other animals. She brings forth in the winter season, and remains in her lodge till the cubs have gained some strength.

“The male always lodges in the ground, under the roots of trees. He takes to this habitation as soon as



the snow falls, and remains there till it has disappeared. The Indians remark that the bear comes out in the spring with the same fat which he carried in in the autumn; but, after exercise of only a few days, becomes lean. Excepting for a short part of the season, the male lives constantly alone.

“The fat of our bear was melted down, and the oil filled six porcupine skins. A part of the meat was cut into strips and fire-dried, after which it was put into the vessels containing the oil, where it remained in perfect preservation until the middle of summer.”

When spring came, and they returned to the more travelled routes and met other Indians, it was seen that these people were all anxious lest the English should this summer avenge the outbreak of the Indians of the previous year. Henry was exceedingly anxious to escape from his present life, and his brother was willing that he should go, but this appeared difficult. At last, however, a Canadian canoe, carrying Madame Cadotte, came along, and this good woman was willing to assist Henry so far as she could. He and his brother parted rather sadly, and Henry, now under the guise of a Canadian, took a paddle in Madame Cadotte's canoe. She took him safely to the Sault, where he was welcomed by Monsieur Cadotte, whose great influence among the Indians was easily sufficient to protect him. Soon after this there came an embassy from Sir William Johnson, calling the Indians to come to Niagara and make peace with the English; and after consulting the Great Turtle, who was the guardian spirit of the Chip-



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pewas, a number of young men volunteered to go to Niagara, and among them Henry.

After a long voyage they reached Niagara, where Henry was very kindly received by Sir William Johnson and subsequently was appointed by General Bradstreet, commander of an Indian battalion of ninety-six men, among whom were many of the Indians who, not long before, had been ready and eager to kill him. With this command he moved westward, and after peace had been made with Pontiac at Detroit, with a detachment of troops reached Michilimackinac, where he recovered a part of his property.

## CHAPTER III

### ALEXANDER HENRY

#### II

**T**HE French Government had established regulations governing the fur trade in Canada, and in 1765, when Henry made his second expedition, some features of the old system were still preserved. No person was permitted to enter the countries lying northwest of Detroit unless furnished with a license, and military commanders had the privilege of granting to any individual the exclusive trade of particular districts.

At this time beaver were worth two shillings and sixpence per pound; otter skins, six shillings each; martens, one shilling and sixpence; all this in nominal Michilimackinac currency, although here fur was still the current coin. Henry loaded his four canoes with the value of ten thousand pounds' weight of good and merchantable beaver. For provision he purchased fifty bushels of corn, at ten pounds of beaver per bushel. He took into partnership Monsieur Cadotte, and leaving Michilimackinac July 14, and Sault Sainte-Marie the 26th, he proceeded to his wintering ground at Chagoue-

mig. On the 19th of August he reached the river Ontonagan, notable for its abundance of native copper, which the Indians used to manufacture into spoons and bracelets for themselves. This they did by the mere process of hammering it out. Not far beyond this river he met Indians, to whom he gave credit. "The prices were for a stroud blanket, ten beaver skins; for a white blanket, eight; a pound of powder, two; a pound of shot or of ball, one; a gun, twenty; an axe of one pound weight, two; a knife, one." As the value of a skin was about one dollar, the prices to the Indians were fairly high.

Chagouemig, where Henry wintered, is now known as Chequamegon. It is in Wisconsin, a bay which partly divides Bayfield from Ashland county, and seems always to have been a great gathering place for Indians. There were now about fifty lodges here, making, with those who had followed Henry, about one hundred families. All were poor, their trade having been interfered with by the English invasion of Canada and by Pontiac's war. Henry was obliged to distribute goods to them to the amount of three thousand beaver skins, and this done, the Indians separated to look for fur. Henry sent a clerk to Fond du Lac with two loaded canoes; Fond du Lac being, roughly, the site of the present city of Duluth. As soon as Henry was fairly settled, he built a house, and began to collect fish from the lake as food for the winter. Before long he had two thousand trout and whitefish, the former frequently weighing fifty pounds each, the latter from four to six.

They were preserved by being hung up by the tail and did not thaw during the winter. When the bay froze over, Henry amused himself by spearing trout, and sometimes caught a hundred in a day, each weighing on an average twenty pounds.

He had some difficulty with the first hunting party which brought furs. The men crowded into his house and demanded rum, and when he refused it, they threatened to take all he had. His men were frightened and all abandoned him. He got hold of a gun, however, and on threatening to shoot the first who should lay hands on anything, the disturbance began to subside and was presently at an end. He now buried the liquor that he had, and when the Indians were finally persuaded that he had none to give them, they went and came very peaceably, paying their debts and purchasing goods.

The ice broke up in April, and by the middle of May the Indians began to come in with their furs, so that by the close of the spring Henry found himself with a hundred and fifty packs of beaver, weighing a hundred pounds each, besides twenty-five packs of otter and marten skins. These he took to Michilimackinac, accompanied by fifty canoes of Indians, who still had a hundred packs of beaver that they did not sell. It appears, therefore, that Henry's ten thousand pounds of beaver brought him fifty per cent. profit in beaver, besides the otter and the marten skins which he had.

On his way back he went up the Ontonagan River to see the celebrated mass of copper there, which he

estimated to weigh no less than five tons. So pure was it that with an axe he chopped off a piece weighing a hundred pounds. This great mass of copper, which had been worked at for no one knows how long by Indians and by early explorers, lay there for eighty years after Henry saw it; and finally, in 1843, was removed to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington. It was then estimated to weigh between three and four tons, and the cost of transporting it to the national capital was about \$3,500.

The following winter was passed at Sault Sainte-Marie, and was rather an unhappy one, as the fishery failed, and there was great suffering from hunger. Canadians and Indians gathered there from the surrounding country, driven in by lack of food. Among the incidents of the winter was the arrival of a young man who had been guilty of cannibalism. He was killed by the Indians, not so much as punishment, as from the fear that he would kill and eat some of their children.

A journey to a neighboring bay resulted in no great catch of fish, and returning to the Sault, Henry started for Michilimackinac. At the first encampment, an hour's fishing procured them seven trout, of from ten to twenty pounds' weight. A little later they met a camp of Indians who had fish, and shared with them; and the following day Henry killed a caribou, by which they camped and on which they subsisted for two days.

The following winter Henry stopped at Michipicoten, on the north side of Lake Superior, and about a hundred and fifty miles from the Sault. Here there were

a few people known as *Gens des Terres*, a tribe of Algonquins, living in middle Canada, and ranging from the Athabasca country east to Lake Temiscamingue. A few of them still live near the St. Maurice River, in the Province of Quebec. These people, though miserably poor, and occupying a country containing very few animals, had a high reputation for honesty and worth. Therefore, Henry gave to every man credit for one hundred beaver skins, and to every woman thirty—a very large credit.

There was some game in this country, a few caribou, and some hares and partridges. The hills were well wooded with sugar-maples, and from these, when spring came, Henry made sugar; and for a time this was their sole provision, each man consuming a pound a day, desiring no other food, and being visibly nourished by the sugar. Soon after this, wildfowl appeared in such abundance that subsistence for fifty could without difficulty be shot daily by one man, but this lasted only for a week, by which time the birds all departed. By the end of May all to whom Henry had advanced goods returned, and of the two thousand skins for which he had given them credit, not thirty remained unpaid. The small loss that he did suffer was occasioned by the death of one of the Indians, whose family brought all the skins of which he died possessed, and offered to contribute among themselves the balance.

The following winter was also to be passed at Michipicoten, and in the month of October, after all the

Indians had received their goods and had gone away, Henry set out for the Sault on a visit. He took little provision, only a quart of corn for each person.

On the first night they camped on an island sacred to Nanibojou, one of the Chippewa gods, and failed to offer the tobacco which an Indian would always have presented to the spirit. In the night a violent storm arose which continued for three days. When it abated on the third day they went to examine the net which they had set for fish, and found it gone. The wind was ahead to return to Michipicoten, and they steered for the Sault; but that night the wind shifted and blew a gale for nine days following. They soon began to starve, and though Henry hunted faithfully, he killed nothing more than two snowbirds. One of his men informed him that the other two had proposed to kill and eat a young woman, whom they were taking to the Sault, and when taxed with the proposition, these two men had the hardihood to acknowledge it. The next morning, Henry, still searching for food, found on a rock the *tripe de roche*, a lichen, which, when cooked, yields a jelly which will support life. The discovery of this food, on which they supported themselves thereafter, undoubtedly saved the life of the poor woman. When they embarked on the evening of the ninth day they were weak and miserable; but, luckily, the next morning, meeting two canoes of Indians, they received a gift of fish, and at once landed to feast on them.

In the spring of 1769, and for some years afterward, Henry turned his attention more or less to mines. He



visited the Ile de Maurepas, said to contain shining rocks and stones of rare description, but was much disappointed in the island, which seemed commonplace enough. A year later Mr. Baxter, with whom Henry had formed a partnership for copper mining, returned, and during the following winter, at Sault Sainte-Marie, they built vessels for navigating the lakes. Henry had heard of an island (Caribou Island) in Lake Superior described as covered with a heavy yellow sand like gold-dust, and guarded by enormous snakes. With Mr. Baxter he searched for this island and finally found it, but neither yellow sands nor snakes nor gold. Hawks there were in abundance, and one of them picked Henry's cap from his head. There were also caribou, and they killed thirteen, and found many complete and undisturbed skeletons. Continuing their investigations into the mines about the lakes, they found abundant copper ore, and some supposed to contain silver. But their final conclusion was that the cost of carrying the copper ore to Montreal must exceed its marketable value.

In June, 1775, Henry left Sault Sainte-Marie with four large canoes and twelve small ones, carrying goods and provisions to the value of three thousand pounds sterling. He passed west, over the Grand Portage, entered Lac à la Pluie, passed down to the Lake of the Woods, and finally reached Lake Winnipeg. Here there were Crees, variously known as Christinaux, Kinistineaux, Killistinoes, and Killistinaux. Lake Winnipeg is sometimes called the Lake of the Crees. These



people were primitive. Almost entirely naked, the whole body was painted with red ochre; the head was wholly shaved, or the hair was plucked out, except a spot on the crown, where it grew long and was rolled and gathered into a tuft; the ears were pierced, and filled with bones of fishes and land animals. The women, on the other hand, had long hair, which was gathered into a roll on either side of the head above the ear, and was covered with a piece of skin, painted or ornamented with beads of various colors. The traditions of the Cheyennes of to-day point back to precisely similar methods of dressing the hair of the women and of painting the men.

The Crees were friendly, and gave the traveller presents of wild rice and dried meat. He kept on along the lake and soon joined Peter Pond, a well-known trader of early days. A little later, in early September, the two Frobishers and Mr. Patterson overtook them. On the 1st of October they reached the River de Bourbon, now known as the Saskatchewan, and proceeded up it, using the tow-line to overcome the Great Rapids. They passed on into Lake de Bourbon, now Cedar Lake, and by old Fort Bourbon, built by the Sieur de Vérendrye. At the mouth of the Pasquayah River they found a village of Swampy Crees, the chief of whom expressed his gratification at their coming, but remarked that, as it would be possible for him to kill them all when they returned, he expected them to be extremely liberal with their presents. He then specified what it was that he desired, namely, three casks of gunpowder, four bags of

shot and ball, two bales of tobacco, three kegs of rum, and three guns, together with many smaller articles. Finally he declared that he was a peaceable man, and always tried to get along without quarrels. The traders were obliged to submit to being thus robbed, and passed on up the river to Cumberland House. Here they separated, M. Cadotte going on with four canoes to the Fort des Prairies, a name given then and later to many of the trading posts built on the prairie. This one is probably that Fort des Prairies which was situated just below the junction of the north and south forks of the Saskatchewan River, and was known as Fort Nipewen. Mr. Pond, with two canoes, went to Fort Dauphin, on Lake Dauphin, while the Messrs. Frobisher and Henry agreed to winter together on Beaver Lake. Here they found a good place for a post, and were soon well lodged. Fish were abundant, and the post soon assumed the appearance of a settlement. Owing to the lateness of the season, their canoes could not be buried in the ground, as was the common practice, and they were therefore placed on scaffolds. The fishing here was very successful, and moose were killed. The Indians brought in beaver and bear's meat, and some skins for sale.

In January, 1776, Henry left the fort on Beaver Lake, attended by two men, and provided with dried meat, frozen fish, and cornmeal, to make an excursion over the plains, "or, as the French denominate them, the Prairies, or Meadows." There was snow on the ground, and the baggage was hauled by the men on sledges.

The cold was bitter, but they were provided with "ox skins, which the traders call buffalo robes."

Beaver Lake was in the wooded country, and, indeed, all Henry's journeyings hitherto had been through a region that was timbered; but here, striking south and west, by way of Cumberland House, he says, "I was not far advanced before the country betrayed some approaches to the characteristic nakedness of the plains. The wood dwindled away, both in size and quantity, so that it was with difficulty we could collect sufficient for making a fire, and without fire we could not drink, for melted snow was our only resource, the ice on the river being too thick to be penetrated by the axe." Moreover, the weather was bitterly cold, and after a time provisions grew scanty. No game was seen and no trace of anything human. The men began to starve and to grow weak, but as tracks of elk and moose were seen, Henry cheered them up by telling them that they would certainly kill something before long.

"On the twentieth, the last remains of our provisions were expended; but I had taken the precaution to conceal a cake of chocolate in reserve for an occasion like that which was now arrived. Toward evening my men, after walking the whole day, began to lose their strength, but we nevertheless kept on our feet till it was late, and when we encamped I informed them of the treasure which was still in store. I desired them to fill the kettle with snow, and argued with them the while that the chocolate would keep us alive for five days at least, an interval in which we should surely meet with some Ind-

ian at the chase. Their spirits revived at the suggestion, and, the kettle being filled with two gallons of water, I put into it one square of the chocolate. The quantity was scarcely sufficient to alter the color of the water, but each of us drank half a gallon of the warm liquor, by which we were much refreshed, and in its enjoyment felt no more of the fatigues of the day. In the morning we allowed ourselves a similar repast, after finishing which we marched vigorously for six hours. But now the spirits of my companions again deserted them, and they declared that they neither would, nor could, proceed any further. For myself, they advised me to leave them, and accomplish the journey as I could; but for themselves, they said, that they must die soon, and might as well die where they were as anywhere else.

“While things were in this melancholy posture, I filled the kettle and boiled another square of chocolate. When prepared I prevailed upon my desponding companions to return to their warm beverage. On taking it they recovered inconceivably, and, after smoking a pipe, consented to go forward. While their stomachs were comforted by the warm water they walked well, but as evening approached fatigue overcame them, and they relapsed into their former condition, and, the chocolate being now almost entirely consumed, I began to fear that I must really abandon them, for I was able to endure more hardship than they, and, had it not been for keeping company with them, I could have advanced double the distance within the time which

had been spent. To my great joy, however, the usual quantity of warm water revived them.

“For breakfast the next morning I put the last square of chocolate into the kettle, and, our meal finished, we began our march in but very indifferent spirits. We were surrounded by large herds of wolves which sometimes came close upon us, and who knew, as we were prone to think, the extremity in which we were, and marked us for their prey; but I carried a gun, and this was our protection. I fired several times, but unfortunately missed at each, for a morsel of wolf’s flesh would have afforded us a banquet.

“Our misery, nevertheless, was still nearer its end than we imagined, and the event was such as to give one of the innumerable proofs that despair is not made for man. Before sunset we discovered on the ice some remains of the bones of an elk left there by the wolves. Having instantly gathered them, we encamped, and, filling our kettle, prepared ourselves a meal of strong and excellent soup. The greater part of the night was passed in boiling and regaling on our booty, and early in the morning we felt ourselves strong enough to proceed.

“This day, the twenty-fifth, we found the borders of the plains reaching to the very banks of the river, which were two hundred feet above the level of the ice. Water marks presented themselves at twenty feet above the actual level.

“Want had lost his dominion over us. At noon we saw the horns of a red deer [an elk or wapiti] standing

in the snow on the river. On examination we found that the whole carcass was with them, the animal having broke through the ice in the beginning of the winter in attempting to cross the river too early in the season, while his horns, fastening themselves in the ice, had prevented him from sinking. By cutting away the ice we were enabled to lay bare a part of the back and shoulders, and thus procure a stock of food amply sufficient for the rest of our journey. We accordingly encamped and employed our kettle to good purpose, forgot all our misfortunes, and prepared to walk with cheerfulness the twenty leagues which, as we reckoned, still lay between ourselves and Fort des Prairies.

“Though the deer must have been in this situation ever since the month of November, yet its flesh was perfectly good. Its horns alone were five foot high or more, and it will therefore not appear extraordinary that they should be seen above the snow.

“On the twenty-seventh, in the morning, we discovered the print of snow-shoes, demonstrating that several persons had passed that way the day before. These were the first marks of other human feet than our own which we had seen since our leaving Cumberland House, and it was much to feel that we had fellow-creatures in the wide waste surrounding us. In the evening we reached the fort.”

At Fort des Prairies, Henry saw more provisions than he had ever before dreamed of. In one heap he saw fifty tons of buffalo meat, so fat that the men could hardly find meat lean enough to eat. Immediately



south of this plains country, which he was on the edge of, was the land of the Osinipoilles [Assiniboinés, a tribe of the Dakota or Sioux nation], and some of these people being at the fort, Henry determined to visit them at their village, and on the 5th of February set out to do so. The Indians whom they accompanied carried their baggage on dog travois. They used snowshoes and travelled swiftly, and at night camped in the shelter of a little grove of wood. There were fourteen people in the tent in which Henry slept that night, but these were not enough to keep each other warm. They started each morning at daylight, and travelled as long as they could, and over snow that was often four feet deep. During the journey they saw buffalo, which Henry calls wild oxen, but did not disturb them, as they had no time to do so, and no means of carrying the flesh if they had killed any. One night they met two young men who had come out to meet the party. They had not known that there were white men with it, and announced that they must return to advise the chief of this; but before they could start, a storm came up which prevented their departure. All that night and part of the next day the wind blew fiercely, with drifting snow. "In the morning we were alarmed by the approach of a herd of oxen, who came from the open ground to shelter themselves in the wood. Their numbers were so great that we dreaded lest they should fairly trample down the camp; nor could it have happened otherwise but for the dogs, almost as numerous as they, who were able to keep them in check. The



Indians killed several when close upon their tents, but neither the fire of the Indians nor the noise of the dogs could soon drive them away. Whatever were the terrors which filled the wood, they had no other escape from the terrors of the storm."

Two days later they reached the neighborhood of the camp, which was situated in a woody island. Messengers came to welcome them, and a guard armed with bows and spears, evidently the soldiers, to escort them to the home which had been assigned them. They were quartered in a comfortable skin lodge, seated on buffalo robes; women brought them water for washing, and presently a man invited them to a feast, himself showing them the way to the head chief's tent. The usual smoking, feasting, and speech-making followed.

These Osinipoilles seemed not before to have seen white men, for when walking about the camp, crowds of women and children followed them, very respectfully, but evidently devoured by insatiable curiosity. Water here was obtained by hanging a buffalo paunch kettle filled with snow in the smoke of the fire, and, as the snow melted, more and more was added, until the paunch was full of water. During their stay they never had occasion to cook in the lodge, being constantly invited to feasts. They had with them always the guard of soldiers, who were careful to allow no one to crowd upon or annoy the travellers. They had been here but a short time when the head chief sent them word that he was going to hunt buffalo the next day, and asked them to be of the party.

“In the morning we went to the hunt accordingly. The chief was followed by about forty men and a great number of women. We proceeded to a small island [of timber] on the plain, at the distance of five miles from the village. On our way we saw large herds of oxen at feed, but the hunters forebore to molest them lest they should take the alarm.

“Arrived at the island, the women pitched a few tents, while the chief led his hunters to its southern end, where there was a pound or inclosure. The fence was about four feet high, and formed of strong stakes of birch wood, wattled with smaller branches of the same. The day was spent in making repairs, and by the evening all was ready for the hunt.

“At daylight several of the more expert hunters were sent to decoy the animals into the pound. They were dressed in ox skins, with the hair and horns. Their faces were covered, and their gestures so closely resembled those of the animals themselves that, had I not been in the secret, I should have been as much deceived as the oxen.

“At ten o'clock one of the hunters returned, bringing information of the herd. Immediately all the dogs were muzzled; and, this done, the whole crowd of men and women surrounded the outside of the pound. The herd, of which the extent was so great that I cannot pretend to estimate the numbers, was distant half a mile, advancing slowly, and frequently stopping to feed. The part played by the decoyers was that of approaching them within hearing and then bellowing

like themselves. On hearing the noise, the oxen did not fail to give it attention, and, whether from curiosity or sympathy, advanced to meet those from whom it proceeded. These, in the meantime, fell back deliberately toward the pound, always repeating the call whenever the oxen stopped. This was reiterated till the leaders of the herd had followed the decoyers into the jaws of the pound, which, though wide asunder toward the plain, terminated, like a funnel, in a small aperture or gateway, and within this was the pound itself. The Indians remark that in all herds of animals there are chiefs, or leaders, by whom the motions of the rest are determined.

“The decoyers now retired within the pound, and were followed by the oxen. But the former retired still further, withdrawing themselves at certain movable parts of the fence, while the latter were fallen upon by all the hunters and presently wounded and killed by showers of arrows. Amid the uproar which ensued the oxen made several attempts to force the fence, but the Indians stopped them and drove them back by shaking skins before their eyes. Skins were also made use of to stop the entrance, being let down by strings as soon as the oxen were inside. The slaughter was prolonged till the evening, when the hunters returned to their tents. Next morning all the tongues were presented to the chief, to the number of seventy-two.

“The women brought the meat to the village on sledges drawn by dogs. The lumps on the shoulders, and the hearts, as well as the tongues, were set apart

for feasts, while the rest was consumed as ordinary food, or dried, for sale at the fort."

Henry has much to say about the Assiniboines, their methods of hunting, religion, marriage, healing, and many other customs. He notes especially their cruelty to their slaves, and says that the Assiniboines seldom married captive women.

On the 19th of February the Assiniboine camp started to the Fort des Prairies, and on the 28th camped at a little distance from it; but Henry and his companions went on, and reached the post that evening. Henry declares that "The Osinipoilles at this period had had no acquaintance with any foreign nation sufficient to affect their ancient and pristine habits. Like the other Indians, they were cruel to their enemies; but, as far as the experience of myself and other Europeans authorizes me to speak, they were a harmless people with a large share of simplicity of manners and plain dealing. They lived in fear of the Cristinaux, by whom they were not only frequently imposed upon, but pillaged, when the latter met their bands in smaller numbers than their own."

On the 22d of March Henry set out to return to Beaver Lake. They reached Cumberland House on the 5th of April, and Beaver Lake on the 9th. The lake was still covered with ice, and fish had grown scarce, so that it was necessary to keep fishing all the time in order to provide sustenance. Early in May, however, water-fowl made their appearance, and for some little time there was abundance. They left their

post on the 21st of April, very short of provisions. They travelled slowly, finally coming to a large lake which, on the 6th of June, was still frozen over, but the ice was too weak to be crossed. The Indians killed some moose. On reaching Churchill River they set out for Lake Arabuthcow [Athabasca] with six Canadians and an Indian woman as guide. The river was sometimes broad and slow-flowing, and again narrow and very rapid. Fish were plenty. On January 24th they reached Isle à la Crosse Lake, and met a number of Indians, to whom they made presents and whom they invited to visit them at their fort. These Indians seem to have been Chipewyans, known to ethnologists as Athabascans. They accepted the white men's invitation, and all started for the fort, continuing the journey day and night, stopping only to boil the kettle.

The discipline among these Athabasca Indians seemed exceedingly good, as, in fact, it usually was in primitive times. The orders given by the chief were conscientiously obeyed, and this under circumstances of much temptation, since, when liquor was being served out to the young men, a certain number were told off who were ordered not to drink at all, but to maintain a constant guard over the white men.

In the trade which followed, the Indians delivered their skins at a small window in the fort, made for that purpose, asking at the same time for the different articles they wished to purchase, of which the prices had been previously settled with the chiefs. The trade lasted for more than two days, and amounted to 12,000

beaver skins, besides large numbers of otter and marten skins. These Indians had come from Lake Arabuthcow, at which they had wintered. They reported that at the farther end of that lake was a river called Peace River, which descended from the Stony or Rocky Mountains, from which mountains the distance to the Salt Lake, meaning the Pacific Ocean, was not great. Other things the Indians told Henry which he did not then understand, but a few years later Alexander MacKenzie was to meet these problems and to solve many of them. These Indians dressed in beaver skins, and were orderly and unoffending. Mr. Joseph Frobisher and Henry now set out to return to the Grand Portage, leaving the remainder of their merchandise in the care of Thomas Frobisher, who was to go with them to Lake Athabasca.

When Henry reached the Lake of the Woods he found there some Indians, who told him that a strange nation had entered Montreal, taken Quebec, killed all the English, and would certainly be at the Grand Portage before they reached there. Henry remarked to his companion that he suspected the Bastonnais had been up to some mischief in Canada, and the Indians at once exclaimed, "Yes, that's the name, Bastonnais." Bastonnais or Bostonnais, that is, "Boston men," was a name commonly used in the Northwest to distinguish the Americans from the English, or "King George men."

Without further accident Henry reached the Grand Portage, from which place he continued to Montreal,



which he reached the 15th of October. Here he found that the Americans had been driven out, and that the city was protected by the forces of General Burgoyne. The capture of Montreal took place in the fall of 1775, and Quebec was besieged during the winter of 1775-1776, and it was nearly a year later that Henry heard the news at the Lake of the Woods.

This ends the account of Henry's travels, but he was still in the fur trade for many years later. In 1785 he was a leading merchant of Montreal, and in 1790 he returned to Michilimackinac.

His book was published in New York in 1809, and thus not until eight years after the publication of Alexander Mackenzie's great work. Henry died in Montreal, April 4, 1824, in the 85th year of his age.

Besides himself being a fur trader, Henry was a father of fur traders. His son, William Henry, is constantly mentioned in the diary of Alexander Henry the younger. A second son, Alexander, was also in the fur trade, and was killed on the Liard River. Alexander Henry the younger, a nephew, is well known, and will be noticed hereafter. A Mr. Bethune, constantly spoken of by Alexander Henry, Jr., may, or may not, have been a relative. Certain it is that Alexander Henry had nephews named Bethune.

The narrative is remarkable from its simplicity and clearness of style, as well as for the keen powers of observation shown by the writer. It is one of the most interesting of the many interesting volumes on the fur trade of its own and later times.



## CHAPTER IV

### JONATHAN CARVER

AT the close of the "late war with France," when peace had been established by the treaty of Versailles, in the year 1763, Jonathan Carver, the captain of a company of provincial troops during the French and Indian War, began to consider how he might continue to do service to his country and contribute as much as lay in his power to make advantageous to Great Britain that vast territory which had been acquired by that war in North America. What this territory was, how far it extended, what were its products, who were its inhabitants, were some of the questions that suggested themselves to Carver. He was a good patriot, and felt that knowledge as to these points would be of the greatest importance to his country. With the natural suspicion that Englishmen of his time felt of the French, he believed that they, while they retained their power in North America, had taken every artful method to keep all other nations, particularly the English, ignorant of everything concerning the interior parts of the country. "To accomplish this design with the greatest certainty," he says, "they had published in-

accurate maps and false accounts; calling the different nations of the Indians by nicknames they had given them, and not by those really appertaining to them. Whether the intention of the French in doing this was to prevent these nations from being discovered and traded with, or to conceal their discourse, when they talked to each other of the Indian concerns, in their presence, I will not determine; but whatsoever was the cause from which it arose, it tended to mislead."

Carver contemplated something more important and far-reaching than the mere investigation of the country, for he says: "What I chiefly had in view after gaining a knowledge of the manners, customs, languages, soil, and natural products of the different nations that inhabit the back of the Mississippi, was to ascertain the breadth of that vast continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean in its broadest part, between 43 and 46 degrees north latitude. Had I been able to accomplish this, I intended to have proposed to the government to establish a post in some of those parts about the Straits of Annian [Puget Sound] which, having been first discovered by Sir Francis Drake, of course belonged to the English. This, I am convinced, would greatly facilitate the discovery of the northwest passage, or a communication between Hudson's Bay and the Pacific Ocean, an event so desirable, and which has been so often sought for, but without success. Besides this important end, a settlement on that extremity of America would answer many good purposes, and repay every expense the establishment of it might occasion. For

it would not only disclose new sources of trade, and promote many useful discoveries, but would open a passage for conveying intelligence to China, and the English settlements in the East Indies, with greater expedition than a tedious voyage by the Cape of Good Hope or the Straits of Magellan would allow of."

Carver's projects for crossing the continent to the Pacific Ocean proved abortive; yet he travelled into the interior nearly as far as any one had hitherto advanced. True, the Verendryes and one or two of the Jesuit Fathers went beyond him on this parallel of latitude; yet the work which Carver published is almost the first that touches on a region lying well within the borders of the Louisiana Purchase, and now one of the most important sections of the United States.

In his introduction, Carver has a prophetic word to say about the unhappy relations existing, when he wrote, between Great Britain and America. "To what power or authority this new world will become dependent, after it has arisen from its present uncultivated state, time alone can discover. But as the seat of Empire, from time immemorial, has been gradually progressive toward the west, there is no doubt but that at some future period, mighty kingdoms will emerge from these wildernesses, and stately palaces and solemn temples, with gilded spires reaching the skies, supplant the Indians' huts, whose only decorations are the barbarous trophies of their vanquished enemies."

In June, 1766, Carver left Boston for the interior parts of North America. He has little to say about

the country lying adjacent to the "back-settlements," which, he observes, have often been described. He passed through the Great Lakes, mentioning as he goes various Indian tribes and some of the products of the country, stopped some little time at the great town of the Winnebagoes, at Lake Winnebago, in Wisconsin, where he was very civilly received. At this time these people had a queen, or woman chief. He discusses this tribe at some length, and incidentally repeats a curious story: "An elderly chief more particularly acquainted me that, about forty-six winters ago, he marched, at the head of fifty warriors, toward the southwest for three moons. That during this expedition, whilst they were crossing a plain, they discovered a body of men on horseback, who belonged to the Black People; for so they call the Spaniards. As soon as they perceived them, they proceeded with caution, and concealed themselves till night came on; when they drew so near as to be able to discern the number and situation of their enemies. Finding they were not able to cope with so great a superiority by daylight, they waited till they had retired to rest; when they rushed upon them, and after having killed the greatest part of the men, took eighty horses loaded with what they termed white stone. This I suppose to have been silver, as he told me the horses were shod with it, and that their bridles were ornamented with the same. When they had satiated their revenge, they carried off their spoil, and being got so far as to be out of reach of the Spaniards that had escaped their fury, they left the use-

less and ponderous burthen, with which the horses were loaded, in the woods, and mounting themselves, in this manner returned to their friends. The party they had thus defeated, I conclude to be the caravan that annually conveys to Mexico the silver which the Spaniards find in great quantities on the mountains lying near the heads of the Colorado River; and the plains where the attack was made, probably, some they were obliged to pass over in their way to the heads of the River St. Fee, or Rio del Nord, which falls into the Gulf of Mexico to the west of the Mississippi.”

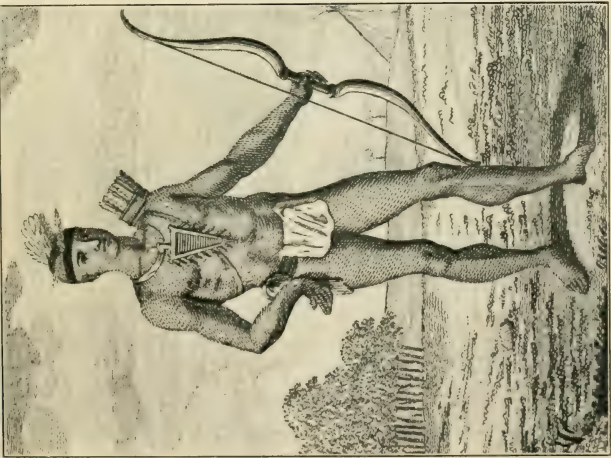
From the Winnebago town, Carver proceeded up the Fox River, and then carried across a short distance to the Ouisconsin River, and proceeded down that. Here he found the great town of the Saukies, the largest and best built Indian town he ever saw. It consisted of “about ninety houses, each large enough for several families, built of hewn plank, neatly jointed, and covered with bark so compactly as to keep out the most penetrating rains.” The streets were regular and spacious; and it appeared more like a civilized town than the abode of savages. About the town lay the plantations of the Indians, in which they raised great quantities of corn, beans, and melons; and their annual product was so large that this place was esteemed the best market for traders to furnish themselves with provisions of any within eight hundred miles. Near the mouth of the Wisconsin River, on the banks of the Mississippi, the Ottigaumies—Outagami, *i.e.*, “people of the other band,” that is the Foxes—had a large town,

at a place called "La Prairie des Chiens [Carver writes this name in various ways], which signifies Dog Plains," a great trading place.

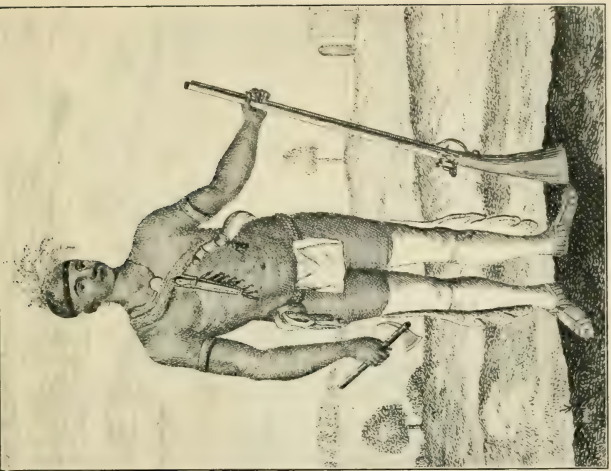
About the first of November, Carver reached Lake Pepin, and speaks with the greatest enthusiasm of the beauty of the country, its apparent productiveness, and the extraordinary number of game and wild fowl seen near about it. "On the plains," he says, "are the largest buffalo of any in America. In the groves are found great plenty of turkeys and partridges; while great numbers of fowl, such as storks, swans, geese, brants, and ducks frequent the lake." A little below that lake he discovered, in a fine, level, open plain, what had once been a breastwork, about four feet in height, extending the best part of a mile, and sufficiently capacious to cover five thousand men; one of the famous mounds for which the Mississippi Valley has so long been celebrated.

About thirty miles above Lake Pepin, near the St. Croix River, Carver met three bands of the Naudowessie—Sioux—Indians; and while he was there a war party of Chippewas approached the camp, and seemed to be preparing for an attack. The Sioux requested Carver to help them, to put himself at their head and lead them against their enemies. This the traveller was of course unwilling to do, for his work in the country made it important that he should be friendly with all people. He endeavored to persuade the Sioux to allow him to attempt to make peace with the Chippewas, and when at length they assented, he met the in-





A MAN OF THE NAUDOWESSIE.



A MAN OF THE OTTOGAMIEN.

*From Tricels Through the Interior Parts of North America, by Jonathan Carver.*





vaders and succeeded in inducing them to turn back without making an attack. He then persuaded the Sioux to move their camp to another part of the country, lest the Chippewas should change their mind and return to attack them. Carver declares that this diplomatic success gained him great credit with both Sioux and Chippewas; that to it he was indebted for the friendly reception that he afterward met with the Naudowessie of the Plains; and that when many months later he reached the village of the Chippewas, farther to the north, he was received with great cordiality by the chiefs, many of whom thanked him for having prevented the mischief.

About thirty miles below the Falls of St. Anthony, Carver was shown a remarkable cave of amazing depth, which the Indians called *Wacon-teebe*—*Wakán tipi*, mysterious or sacred dwelling—that is to say, “the Dwelling of the Great Spirit.” Within it is a lake, which “extends to an unsearchable distance; for the darkness of the cave prevents all attempts to acquire a knowledge of it.” The walls are covered with many Indian hieroglyphics, which seem to be very ancient, for time had nearly covered them with moss. The Falls of St. Anthony greatly impressed Carver, as they did the young Indian in his company.

At the mouth of the river St. Francis, Carver says, “I observed here many deer and carraboes—a record for the caribou unusually far south for the mid continent—some elk, with abundance of beavers, otters and other furs. Not far above this, to the northeast, are a

number of small lakes called the Thousand Lakes; the parts about which though but little frequented, are the best within many miles for hunting, as the hunter never fails of returning loaded beyond his expectations."

Above the St. Francis River, the Mississippi was new ground, for Hennepin, the river's first explorer, had not passed up it farther than the St. Francis, and Carver remarks that, "As this river is not navigable from sea for vessels of any considerable burthen, much higher up than the forks of the Ohio, and even that is accomplished with great difficulty, owing to the rapidity of the current, and the windings of the river, those settlements which may be made on the interior branches of it must be indisputably secure from the attacks of any maritime power. But at the same time the settlers will have the advantage of being able to convey their produce to the sea-ports with great facility, the current of the river, from its source to its entrance into the Gulph of Mexico, being extremely favorable for doing this in small craft. This might also in time be facilitated by canals or shorter cuts; and a communication opened by water with New York, Canada, etc., by way of the lakes."

Returning to the mouth of the river St. Pierre, now the Minnesota River, Carver ascended this about two hundred miles, to the country of the Naudowessie of the Plains. The northern branch of the river St. Pierre rises, he says, from a number of lakes near the Shining Mountains; and it is from some of these also that a

capital branch of the river Bourbon—the York, now Nelson River—which runs into Hudson's Bay, has its sources. All this geography comes from the accounts of Indians, and is clearly misunderstood as to distance and location, for Carver says, also, that the river Messorie, which enters the Mississippi far to the southward, also takes its rise at the head of the river St. Pierre. His distances were very far from right, for he makes the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, the river Bourbon, and the Oregon, or River of the West (Columbia), head all together in these high mountains.

At the great Sioux camp, which he came to on this river, and which he estimated to contain a thousand people, most of whom had never seen a white man, he was most hospitably received. He spent the winter with them, studying their language, acquiring so far as possible a knowledge of the geography of the country, and at last, with a considerable portion of the camp, returning down the river to the Great Cave, and to the burial ground which lay near it. Before parting with the Sioux he held a council with them, at which long speeches were made by both Englishman and Indians, and finally Carver left them to return to La Prairie du Chien, where there were some traders from whom he purchased goods for his farther journey.

Among the places now well known which Carver visited, was what he calls the Red Mountain, from which the Indians get a sort of red stone out of which they hew the bowls of their pipes. This is, no doubt, the pipestone quarry, described by Catlin, and then

owned by the Sioux Indians, which has been purchased by the government as a park. Carver says, also, that in some of these parts is found a black, hard clay, or rather stone, of which, the Indians make their family utensils.

Carver was much impressed by the beauties of the country through which the river St. Pierre [Minnesota River] flowed; of which he says: "Wild rice grows here in great abundance; and every part is filled with trees, bending under their loads of fruit, such as plums, grapes, and apples; the meadows are covered with hops, and many sorts of vegetables; whilst the ground is stored with useful roots, with angelica, spikenard, and ground-nuts as large as hen's eggs. At a little distance from the sides of the river are eminences, from which you have views that cannot be exceeded even by the most beautiful of those I have already described; amidst these are delightful groves, and such amazing quantities of maples, that they would produce sugar sufficient for any number of inhabitants."

Carver at length reached La Prairie du Chien, and after attending to various matters there, returned up the Mississippi to the place where the Chippewa River enters it, a little below Lake Pepin. Here he engaged an Indian pilot, and instructed him to steer toward the Ottowaw Lakes, which lie near the head of that river. About thirty miles from the mouth, Carver took the easternmost of the two branches and passed along through the wide, gently flowing stream. "The country adjoining to the river," he says, "for about sixty

miles, is very level, and on its banks lie fine meadows, where larger droves of buffaloes and elks were feeding, than I had observed in any other part of my travels. The track between the two branches of this river is termed the Road of War between the Chipeway and Naudowessie Indians." Near the head of the stream he came upon a Chippewa town, the houses built after the Indian manner, and having neat plantations behind them. He then carried over to the head of the river St. Croix, descended one of the branches, and then ascended another; and on both streams he discovered several mines of virgin copper. Then carrying across a height of land and descending another stream, he found himself on Lake Superior, and coasted along its western shores until he reached the Grand Portage, between Lake Superior and Lac la Pluie, or Rainy Lake.

Here were met a large party of Killistinoe and Assinipoil Indians, "with their respective kings and their families." They had come to this place to meet the traders from the east, who were accustomed to make this their road to the north-west. From these Indians Carver received considerable geographical information about the country to the westward, much of which, however, is too vague to be very valuable. Many of the great lakes to the westward were mentioned and described, and some of them are readily recognized. Such are Lake Winnepeek, Lac du Bois, and Lac la Pluye, or Rainy Lake. Of the country about Lake Bourbon and Lake Winnepeek it was said that there

were found some buffalo of small size, which were fat and good in the latter part of the summer. This difference in size Carver attributes to their northerly situation; "just as the black cattle of the northern parts of Great Britain differ from English oxen." But it is quite probable that these "small buffalo" may have been musk-oxen, and their location wrong.

"These Indians informed me that to the northwest of Lake Winnepeek lies another whose circumference vastly exceeded any they had given me an account of. They describe it as much larger than Lake Superior. But as it appears to be so far to the northwest, I should imagine that it was not a lake, but rather the Archipelago or broken waters that form the communication between Hudson's Bay and the northern parts of the Pacific Ocean."

As already stated, Carver believed that the headwaters of the Missouri were not far from the headwaters of his St. Pierre River. The Indians told him that they frequently crossed over from the head of that stream to the Missouri. The nearest water to the head of the Minnesota River is Big Sioux River in Dakota, which is, in fact, a tributary of the Missouri.

The ethnological information there gathered was as little trustworthy as that concerning the geography of the more distant parts. For example, it is said that in the country belonging to the Pawnees, and the Pawnawnees, nations inhabiting some branches of the Messorie River, mandrakes are frequently found, a species of root resembling human beings of both sexes; and that these



are more perfect than such as are discovered about the Nile in Nether-Ethiopia.

“A little to the northwest of the heads of the Messorie and the St. Pierre, the Indians further told me, that there was a nation rather smaller and whiter than the neighboring tribes, who cultivate the ground, and (as far as I could gather from their expressions), in some measure, the arts. To this account they added that some of the nations who inhabit those parts that lie to the west of the Shining Mountains, have gold so plenty among them that they make their most common utensils of it. These mountains (which I shall describe more particularly hereafter) divide the waters that fall into the South Sea from those that run into the Atlantic.

“The people dwelling near them are supposed to be some of the different tribes that were tributary to the Mexican kings, and who fled from their native country to seek an asylum in these parts, about the time of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, more than two centuries ago.” After a brief discussion of the reasons which may have led these supposed immigrants, and the Winnebagoes to leave their southern home for the north, Carver speaks at some length of the Shining or Rocky Mountains, just mentioned.

“That range of mountains, of which the Shining Mountains are a part, begin at Mexico, and continuing northward on the back or at the east of California, separate the waters of those numerous rivers that fall either into the Gulph of Mexico or the Gulph of California. From thence continuing their course still north-

ward, between the sources of the Mississippi and the rivers that run into the South Sea, they appear to end in about forty-seven or forty-eight degrees of north latitude; where a number of rivers arise, and empty themselves either into the South Sea, into Hudson's Bay, or into the waters that communicate between these two seas.

"Among these mountains, those that lie to the west of the river St. Pierre are called the Shining Mountains, from an infinite number of crystal stones, of an amazing size, with which they are covered, and which, when the sun shines full upon them, sparkle so as to be seen at a very great distance.

"This extraordinary range of mountains is calculated to be more than three thousand miles in length, without any very considerable intervals, which I believe surpasses anything of the kind in the other quarters of the globe. Probably in future ages they may be found to contain more riches in their bowels than those of Indostan and Malabar, or that are produced on the Golden Coast of Guinea; nor will I except even the Peruvian mines. To the west of these mountains, when explored by future Columbuses or Raleighs, may be found other lakes, rivers and countries, full fraught with all the necessities or luxuries of life; and where future generations may find an asylum, whether driven from their country by the ravages of lawless tyrants, or by religious persecutions, or reluctantly leaving it to remedy the inconveniences arising from a superabundant increase of inhabitants; whether, I say, impelled

by these, or allured by hopes of commercial advantages, there is little doubt but their expectations will be fully gratified by these rich and unexhausted climes."

The pages which Carver devotes to a description of the unknown country to the west, are inserted in his account while he was sojourning with these Crees and Assiniboines, at the Grand Portage. There were more than three hundred people in the camp, and as they waited for the traders who did not come, their stock of provisions began to run low; and the coming of the traders was awaited with an impatience that increased day by day.

It was during this period of waiting that Carver had an opportunity to witness one of those prophecies by a priest, or medicine man, which even in modern times have puzzled many cool and clear heads; and though the story of what he saw is long, yet it is worth while to give his account of it in full. It appears that one day while all were expressing their hopes for the early arrival of the traders, and were sitting on the hill looking over the lake, in the hope that they might be seen, the chief priest of the Crees informed those who were with him that he would endeavor to obtain information from the Great Spirit as to when the traders would arrive. Carver gave little heed to the suggestion, supposing it to be merely a juggling trick; but the chief of the tribe advised him that the priest had made this offer chiefly for the purpose of allaying his anxiety, and at the same time to convince Carver of his ability to talk with the Great Spirit.

"The following evening was fixed upon for this spiritual conference. When everything had been properly prepared, the king came to me and led me to a capacious tent, the covering of which was drawn up, so as to render what was transacting within visible to those who stood without. We found the tent surrounded by a great number of the Indians, but we readily gained admission, and seated ourselves on skins laid on the ground for that purpose.

"In the centre I observed that there was a place of an oblong shape, which was composed of stakes stuck in the ground, with intervals between, so as to form a kind of chest or coffin, large enough to contain the body of a man. These were of a middle size, and placed at such a distance from each other, that whatever lay within them was readily to be discerned. The tent was perfectly illuminated by a great number of torches made of splinters cut from the pine or birch tree, which the Indians held in their hands.

"In a few minutes the priest entered; when an amazing large elk's skin being spread on the ground, just at my feet, he laid himself down upon it, after having stript himself of every garment except that which he wore close about his middle. Being now prostrate upon his back, he first laid hold of one side of the skin, and folded it over him, and then the other; leaving only his head uncovered. This was no sooner done, than two of the young men who stood by took about forty yards of strong cord, made also of an elk's hide, and rolled it tight around his body, so that he was

completely swathed within the skin. Being thus bound up like an Egyptian mummy, one took him by the heels and the other by the head, and lifted him over the pales into the inclosure. I could now also discern him as plain as I had hitherto done, and I took care not to turn my eyes a moment from the object before me, that I might the more readily detect the artifice, for such I doubted not but that it would turn out to be.

“The priest had not lain in this situation more than a few seconds when he began to mutter. This he continued to do for some time, and then by degrees grew louder and louder, till at length he spoke articulately; however, what he uttered was in such a mixed jargon of the Chippeway, Ottawaw, and Killistinoe languages, that I could understand but very little of it. Having continued in this tone for a considerable while he at last exerted his voice to its utmost pitch, sometimes raving and sometimes praying, till he had worked himself into such an agitation that he foamed at his mouth.

“After having remained near three-quarters of an hour in the place and continued his vociferation with unabated vigor, he seemed to be quite exhausted, and remained speechless. But in an instant he sprung to his feet, notwithstanding at the time he was put in it appeared impossible for him to move either his legs or arms, and shaking off his covering, as quick as if the bands with which it had been bound were burned asunder, he began to address those who stood around, in a firm and audible voice. ‘My Brothers,’ said he, ‘the Great Spirit has deigned to hold a talk with his

servant at my earnest request. He has not, indeed, told me when the persons we expect will be here, but to-morrow, soon after the sun has reached his highest point in the heavens, a canoe will arrive, and the people in that will inform us when the traders will come.' Having said this, he stepped out of the inclosure, and after he had put on his robes, dismissed the assembly. I own I was greatly astonished at what I had seen, but as I observed that every eye in the company was fixed on me with a view to discover my sentiments, I carefully concealed every emotion.

"The next day the sun shone bright, and long before noon all the Indians were gathered together on the eminence that overlooked the lake. The old king came to me and asked me whether I had so much confidence in what the priest had foretold as to join his people on the hill and wait for the completion of it? I told him that I was at a loss what opinion to form of the prediction, but that I would readily attend him. On this we walked together to the place where the others were assembled. Every eye was again fixed by turns on me and on the lake; when just as the sun had reached his zenith, agreeable to what the priest had foretold, a canoe came round a point of land about a league distant. The Indians no sooner beheld it than they sent up an universal shout, and by their looks seemed to triumph in the interest their priest thus evidently had with the Great Spirit.

"In less than an hour the canoe reached the shore, when I attended the king and chiefs to receive those



who were on board. As soon as the men were landed, we walked all together to the king's tent, where according to their invariable custom we began to smoke; and this we did, notwithstanding our impatience to know the tidings they brought, without asking any questions; for the Indians are the most deliberate people in the world. However, after some trivial conversation, the king inquired of them whether they had seen anything of the traders? The men replied that they had parted from them a few days before, and that they proposed being here the second day from the present. They accordingly arrived at that time, greatly to our satisfaction, but more particularly to that of the Indians, who found by this event the importance both of their priest and of their nation greatly augmented in the sight of a stranger.

“This story I acknowledge appears to carry with it marks of great credulity in the relator. But no one is less tinctured with that weakness than myself. The circumstances of it I own are of a very extraordinary nature; however, as I can vouch for their being free from either exaggeration or misrepresentation, being myself a cool and dispassionate observer of them all, I thought it necessary to give them to the public. And this I do, without wishing to mislead the judgment of my readers, or to make any superstitious impressions on their minds, but leaving them to draw from it what conclusions they please.”

The arrival of the traders, so anxiously looked for, did not greatly help Carver, who found that he could



not procure from them the goods that he desired, and shortly afterward he proceeded eastward, having coasted around the north and east shores of Lake Superior. He describes the lake, and the various peoples who inhabit its borders, most of whom are Chippewas. During his trip, he found native copper on a stream running into the lake on the south, and describes how large a trade might be made in this metal, which, as he says, "costs nothing on the spot, and requires but little expense to get it on board; could be conveyed in boats or canoes through the Falls of St. Marie to the Isle of St. Joseph, which lies at the bottom of the straits near the entrance into Lake Huron; from thence it might be put on board large vessels, and in them transported across that lake to the Falls of Niagara; there being carried by land across the Portage, it might be conveyed without much more obstruction to Quebec. The cheapness and ease with which any quantity of it may be procured will make up for the length of way that it is necessary to transport it before it reaches the seacoast, and enable the proprietors to send it to foreign markets on as good terms as it can be exported from other countries." Stockholders in the Calumet and Hecla and in other Lake Superior copper concerns are requested to take notice.

The fishing of Lake Superior impressed Carver as much as it has other travellers. Of these fish he says: "The principal and best are the trout and sturgeon, which may be caught at almost any season in the greatest abundance. The trout in general weigh about

twelve pounds; but some are caught that exceed fifty. Besides these, a species of white fish is taken in great quantities here, that resemble a shad in their shape, but they are rather thicker, and less bony; they weigh about four pounds each, and are of a delicious taste. The best way of catching these fish is with a net; but the trout may be taken at all times with the hook. There are likewise many sorts of smaller fish in great plenty here, and which may be taken with ease; among these is a sort resembling a herring, which are generally made use of as a bait for the trout." The foot of the Sault Ste. Marie, which Carver calls the Falls of St. Marie, is noted by him as "a most commodious station for catching the fish, which are to be found there in immense quantities. Persons standing on the rocks which lie adjacent to it may take with dipping nets, about the months of September and October, the white fish beforementioned; at that season, together with several other species, they crowd up to this spot in such amazing shoals that enough may be taken to supply, when properly cured, thousands of inhabitants throughout the year."

Passing now through the Straits into Lake Huron, this body of water is described, and attention called to the rise and fall of the waters, which Carver says is not diurnal, but occurs in periods of seven years and a half. Still going eastward, the town of Detroit was reached, and something given of its history in recent years, and especially of the conspiracy of Pontiac, and the death of that chief.

In Lake Erie, Carver noticed the islands near the west end, so infested with rattlesnakes that it is very dangerous to land on them; and also the great number of water-snakes, which lie in the sun on the leaves of the large pond-lilies floating on the water.

“The most remarkable of the different species that infest this lake is the hissing-snake [the innocent *Heterodon platyrhinos*], which is of the small, speckled kind, and about eighteen inches long. When anything approaches, it flattens itself in a moment, and its spots, which are of varied dyes, become visibly brighter through rage; at the same time it blows from its mouth with great force a subtile wind, that is reported to be of a nauseous smell; and if drawn in with the breath of the unwary traveller, will infallibly bring on a decline, that in a few months must prove mortal, there being no remedy yet discovered which can counteract its baneful influence.” Still proceeding eastward, the author continues to describe the country, mentioning many well-known lakes, and the peoples about them.

This concludes Carver’s journey, but by no means his book, of which the remaining two-thirds are devoted to the manners and customs of the Indians, with a chapter giving vocabularies of several languages, and other chapters treating of the fauna and flora of the vast region passed over. Like most writers about the Indians, he discusses their origin, quoting a great number of authors, from the discovery of America to the time of his writing; the last of these, Adair, who, as is well known, devoted a very considerable work to prov-

ing to his own satisfaction that the Indians were the lost tribes of Israel. Carver announces that he is of the opinion that "the North American continent received its first inhabitants from the islands which lie between the extremities of Asia and America, viz., Japon, Yeso, or Jedso, Gama's Land, Behring's Isle, with many others"; to which he adds a cluster of islands that reach as far as Siberia, which may possibly be the Aleutian Islands. To support this conclusion, he advances many cogent arguments, and announces that "that great and learned historian Doctor Robinson," is of the same opinion with him.

Concerning the persons and dress of the Indians, Carver has much to say. He notices many things still well known, and speaks of certain others that are so long obsolete as to be almost forgotten. Thus he declares that: "It is also a common custom among them to bore their noses, and wear in them pendants of different sorts. I observed that sea-shells were much worn by those of the interior parts, and reckoned very ornamental; but how they procured them I could not learn: probably by their traffick with other nations nearer the sea." Another custom noted, which has long been obsolete, but is still remembered by the most ancient persons of some of the Western tribes, is the woman's fashion of dressing the hair. To the west of the Mississippi, he says, the Sioux and Assiniboine women "divide their hair in the middle of the head, and form it into two rolls, one against each ear. These rolls are about three inches long, and as large as their wrists.

They hang in a perpendicular attitude at the front of each ear, and descend as far as the lower part of it."

The characteristics of the Indians, their method of reckoning time, their government, division into tribes, their chiefs, food, dances, and many other matters, are described at great length; as is also their hunting, their manner of making war, and, incidentally, the defeat of Braddock, and the massacre of the people under Col. Monroe, at Fort William Henry. Carver himself appears to have been with the prisoners, of whom so many were massacred on that unhappy day; but he himself at length reached Fort Edward in safety. He tells something, also, of the way in which the Indians tortured their captives, and speaks of the Illinois Indian brought into the town of Ottigaumies, who was bound to a tree while all the small boys in the village were permitted to amuse themselves by shooting arrows at the victim. As none of the boys were more than twelve years old, and they were placed at a considerable distance, their arrows did little more than pierce the skin; so that the prisoner stood for more than two days pierced with these arrows. During all this time he sung his warlike exploits, told how much injury he had inflicted on his enemies, and endeavored with his last gasp to incite his tormentors to greater efforts, in order that he might give still greater proofs of his fortitude.

Following the chapter on war comes one on their methods of making peace; then one on games, mar-

riage, religion, and character. The last hundred pages of the volume treats "Of the Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, and Insects, which are found in the interior parts of North America." Of the larger mammals a catalogue is given from which two or three descriptions may be taken.

"The Carrabou. This beast is not near so tall as the moose, however, it is something like it in shape, only rather more heavy, and inclining to the form of an ass. The horns of it are not flat as those of an elk are, but round like those of the deer; they also meet nearer together at the extremities, and bend more over the face than either those of the elk or moose. It partakes of the swiftness of the deer, and is with difficulty overtaken by its pursuers. The flesh of it likewise is equally as good, the tongue particularly is in high esteem. The skin being smooth and free from veins is as valuable as shamoy."

"The Carcajou. This creature, which is of the cat kind, is a terrible enemy to the preceding four species of beasts. He either comes upon them from some concealment unperceived, or climbs up into a tree, and taking his station on some of the branches, waits till one of them, driven by an extreme of heat or cold, takes shelter under it; when he fastens upon his neck, and opening the jugular vein, soon brings his prey to the ground. This he is enabled to do by his long tail, with which he encircles the body of his adversary; and the only means they have to shun their fate is by flying immediately to the water, by this method, as the car-



cajou has a great dislike to that element, he is sometimes got rid of before he can effect his purpose."

There is a very long description of the beaver, and its extraordinary intelligence.

The list of birds, too, is a long one; but that of the fishes is very short. To snakes, as might be imagined, much space is given; but to insects very little. Carver describes the lightning-bug, but adds: "Notwithstanding this effulgent appearance, these insects are perfectly harmless; you may permit them to crawl upon your hand, when five or six, if they freely exhibit their glow together, will enable you to read almost the finest print."

Trees, plants, and shrubs are all described, and among them the wild rice, of which Carver says: "In future periods it will be of great service to the infant colonies, as it will afford them a present support until in the course of cultivation other supplies may be produced; whereas in those realms which are not furnished with this bounteous gift of nature, even if the climate is temperate and the soil good, the first settlers are often exposed to great hardships from the want of an immediate resource for necessary food."

In his appendix, Carver sums up conclusions drawn from his extensive travels in, and wide knowledge of, the interior of the continent. He has faith in the discovery of a north-west passage, and believes that Hudson's Bay would be a safe retreat for the adventurous navigators who might try, at first unsuccessfully, a north-west passage. He even names a certain Rich-



ard Whitworth, gentleman, of England, who had proposed pursuing nearly the same route as Carver, and having built a fort at Lake Pepin, to have proceeded up the river St. Pierre, crossed over the river Messorie, till, having discovered the source of the Oregon, or River of the West, he would have sailed down that river to the place where it is said to empty itself near the Straits of Annian. Carver was to have accompanied this Mr. Whitworth on his explorations, and many of the preparations had been made for the trip, "when the present troubles in America began, which put a stop to an enterprize that promised to be of inconceivable advantage to the British dominions."

So the War of the Revolution put an end to Carver's Western explorations.

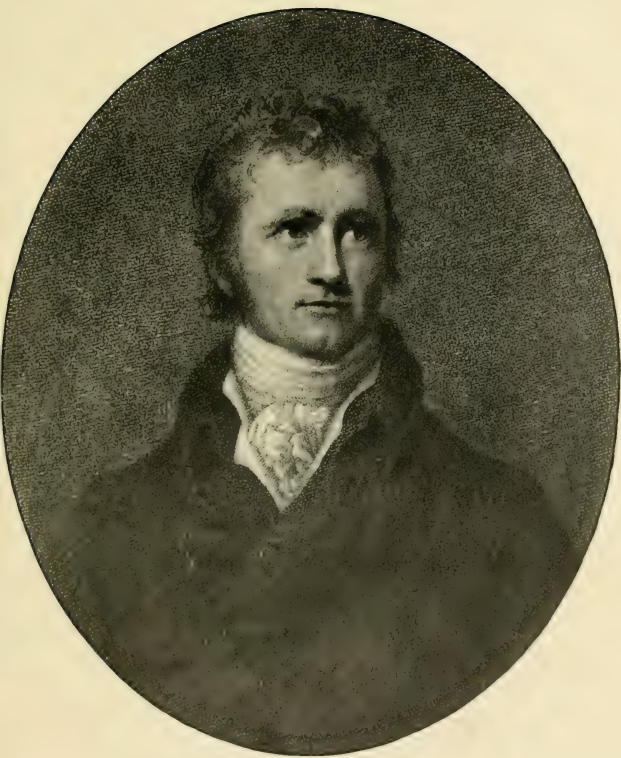
## CHAPTER V

### ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

#### I

OF the early explorers of the north none is more celebrated than Alexander Mackenzie, the first man to penetrate from the interior to the Frozen Ocean, and the first in the farther north to cross the continent. Among the leaders of the north-west he is pre-eminent as a discoverer, and of the early northmen his name is the most often mentioned. His journeyings—that to the Arctic made in the year 1789, and that across the continent in 1792 and 1793—are told of in a splendid volume, published in London in the year 1801, entitled, *Voyages from Montreal and the River St. Lawrence, Through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, in the Year 1789 and 1793*. Its publication was soon followed by the conferring of knighthood on the author.

The earliest explorations of the interior of this continent were all of them by water. By water the first missionaries pushed their way up the St. Lawrence and through the Great Lakes, and then crossing over by short portages to the Mississippi, journeyed down that great highway of more modern times until they



ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

*From Mackenzie's Voyages from Montreal Through the Continent of North America, etc.*



came to the Gulf of Mexico. Later, missionaries and explorers and traders, still from Montreal, followed the water trail up the Great Lakes to the Grand Portage, and thence pressed westward until they reached Lake Winnipeg, the Saskatchewan, and all that broad country which lies east of the northern Rocky Mountains. The frail birch canoe carried their scanty provisions and their goods for trade, and returned laden to the gun-wale with rich packages of furs. Later still, when the people of the United States began to push westward, it was down the Alleghany and the Ohio—still largely by water—that their journeyings were conducted.

Alexander Mackenzie was a fur trader, and he made his way westward, by the usual route, to the Grand Portage, Lake Winnipeg, then up the Saskatchewan and across to Fort Chipewyan, on the Lake of the Hills—now known as Athabaska Lake. Though the journey was long, it was full of interest; the country had been seen by few white people, it abounded in life of many descriptions, all wild, and for the most part undisturbed. He reached Fort Chipewyan with ninety or a hundred men, and without any provision for their sustenance; but the lake was full of fish, its shores abounded with game. The autumn fishing was successful, and the cold during the winter intense, so that fish were caught in great numbers and frozen, remaining good until spring. During the spring and fall vast flocks of wild fowl resorted to the lakes, and immense numbers were killed, so that for short terms the geese supported the life of the traders.

In 1783 and 1784 the Northwest Fur Company had been established, in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company, and included among its partners many of the most celebrated traders of the north. Mackenzie had for five years been employed in the counting house of Messrs. Gregory and McLeod, and was admitted a partner in the Northwest Fur Company, and went to the Indian country in 1785. How enormous the trade that this company carried on is shown by a list of the returns for a single year, which gives 106,000 beaver skins, 2,100 bear, 4,600 otter, 17,000 musquash, 32,000 marten, 6,000 lynx, 600 wolverine, 1,650 fisher, besides a less number of fox, kitfox, wolf, elk, raccoon and deer skins, and buffalo robes. Mackenzie was astronomer as well as trader. He was also an observer who considered the economic possibilities of the country, its fauna and its flora, and especially the game, as well as the human inhabitants.

Mackenzie started from Fort Chipewyan, on the south side of the Lake of the Hills, June 3, 1789, in a birch-bark canoe. His crew consisted of four Canadians, a German, and two Indian women. An Indian interpreter, known as English Chief, and his two wives journeyed in a small canoe, while two young Indians followed in a third. English Chief had been one of the followers of a chief who was with Mr. Hearne on his explorations to the Coppermine River. A fourth canoe, in charge of one of the clerks of the company, Mr. Le Roux, accompanied them, carrying a load of trade goods and presents, together with a part of the

provisions and ammunition of the expedition. Their route was without much adventure until they reached Slave Lake, still covered with ice, somewhat melted near the shore. The gnats and mosquitoes which had troubled them during the first few days that they had been on their way, here left them. Mackenzie says: "The Indians informed me that at a very small distance from either bank of the river are very extensive plains frequented by large herds of buffaloes: while the moose and reindeer keep in the woods that border on it. The beavers, which are in great numbers, build their habitations in small lakes and rivers, as in the larger streams the ice carries everything along with it during the spring. The mud banks in the river are covered with wild fowl, and we this morning killed two swans, ten geese, and one beaver, without suffering the delay of an hour; so that we might have soon filled the canoe with them, if that had been our object." That same day they reached the house erected on Slave Lake by Messrs. Grant and Le Roux in 1786, and here they stopped and pitched their tents, as it seemed likely that the ice would detain them for some time. The nets were set and many fish were caught. Berries were already ripe, and the women were occupied in gathering them, while wild fowl were breeding, and they collected some dozens of their eggs. On Monday, June 15, the ice broke up near them, and cleared a passage to the islands opposite; and at sunset they embarked and crossed to them, where they stopped to gum their canoes, and the next day set out again, following the shores of



the lake. Ice interrupted their passage from time to time. They supplied themselves with food by means of their nets.

On the 18th, two of the hunters killed a reindeer and its fawn. The ice continued to hinder them, but they worked along slowly. On one of the islands that they passed reindeer were seen, and seven killed. The island was named *Isle de Carre Boeuf*. Here occurs a somewhat unusual usage of the term pemmican, described to be "fish dried in the sun, and afterward pounded for the convenience of carriage." The more common meaning of the term is, flesh dried and pounded and mixed with grease—as buffalo pemmican, elk pemmican, caribou pemmican. On Tuesday, the 23d, the explorer met with a little camp—three lodges—of Red-Knife Indians, so called from their copper knives. They informed the explorer that others of their people were near at hand. These Indians—now known as Yellow-Knives—are of Athabaskan stock, thus allied to the Hare, Dog-Rib, and Chipewyan peoples, also to the Navajos and Apaches of the south. They possessed some furs, and Mr. Le Roux secured from them eight packs of good beaver and marten skins. They seemed to know little or nothing about the country to the north, and MacKenzie's inquiries brought forth no useful information.

The ice in the lake was still troublesome, though breaking up fast. On Monday, June 29, they entered the river by which Slave Lake discharges to the north, and made good progress down it. On both sides of the river the Indians reported that there were extensive

plains, which abounded in buffalo and moose-deer. By this time the wild fowl had begun to molt, and the Indians no longer troubled to shoot them, but pursued them in their canoes, killing them with sticks or capturing them alive. On the 1st of July, keeping on down the river, they made a cache of provisions on an island. By this time they had come in sight of high mountains to the west, barren and rocky at the top, but well wooded on the slopes.

On July 3 the current was stronger, and their progress still more rapid. They saw frequent signs of camps, but none of very recent occupation; but on the 5th, smoke was seen on the north shore of the river, and as the canoes drew nearer, natives were discovered running about in apparent alarm. Some took refuge in the woods, others hurried to their canoes. The hunters landed, and calling out to the Chipewyans in their own tongue, assured them that the party was a friendly one, and after some difficulty the Indians became convinced that there was no danger. These were five families of two different tribes, the Slave and the Dog-Rib. Mackenzie offered them the pipe, though it was quite apparent that they were unacquainted with tobacco, and also gave them a drink of grog, which also seemed new to them. However, they appreciated the beauties of knives, beads, awls, rings, hatchets, etc., and soon became so trustful that "They became more familiar even than we expected, for we could not keep them out of our tents; though I did not observe that they attempted to purloin anything.

“The information that they gave respecting the river had so much of the fabulous that I shall not detail it; it will be sufficient just to mention their attempts to persuade us that it would require several winters to get to the sea, and that old age would come upon us before the period of our return; we were also to encounter monsters of such horrid shapes and destructive power as could only exist in their wild imagination. They added, besides, that there were two impassable falls in the river, the first of which was about thirty days’ march from us.”

While these stories did not affect Mackenzie, they did influence his Indians, who were already tired of the voyage, and anxious to turn back, and it required some effort to convince them that it was better to go on. One of the natives was persuaded to accompany them as a guide, and though he afterward wished to withdraw, he was not allowed to, and with some ceremony he finally took his unwilling departure with the white men. These people used bone knives, were tattooed on the face, wore a goose-quill, or a small piece of wood, through the nose, and used vessels woven of wattap—the roots of the spruce or tamarack—in which they boiled their food by hot stones. Arrows were pointed with horn, flint, iron, or copper, and their axes were made of stone. From the neighboring Red-Knives and Chipewyans, by barter for skins, they obtained small pieces of iron, from which also they made knives. Their awls were of iron or horn.

The guide whom they took from this country was

anxious to return to his people, and had to be watched constantly to prevent his escape. As the explorers passed on northward they were constantly in sight of the ridge of snowy mountains to the west. "Our conductor informed us that great numbers of bears and small white buffaloes frequent those mountains, which are also inhabited by Indians." These white buffalo have been thought to be white goats; probably they were the white sheep (*Ovis dalli*) which inhabit the mountains to the west of the Mackenzie River.

The next day more natives were met with, who, as usual, fled on the approach of the white men. One old man, however, did not run, but approached the travellers, "and represented himself as too far advanced in life, and too indifferent about the short time he had to remain in the world, to be very anxious about escaping from any danger that threatened him; at the same time, he pulled his gray hairs from his head by handfuls to distribute among us, and implored our favor for himself and for his relations. Our guide, however, at length removed his fears, and persuaded him to recall the fugitives, who consisted of eighteen people." These joyfully received the presents of beads, knives, and awls, which were offered them, and overwhelmed the explorers with hospitable attentions, giving them food, which was gladly accepted. They told of dangers to be met with farther down the river, and some of the natives accompanied Mackenzie's people to point out the safest channel of the rapids, which they declared to be just beyond; but as a matter of fact there were

no rapids. The river was about three hundred yards broad, and Mackenzie's soundings gave fifty fathoms of water.

Along the river there were almost continuous encampments of Indians, all of whom were spoken to, and all of whom traded food, such as hares, ptarmigan and fish, to the travellers. The last parties met with were Hare Indians, who told wonderful stories of danger and of fearful things to be met on the river; and these terrors were not distant, for according to the Indians, behind an island opposite their camp dwelt a spirit in the river which swallowed every person that approached it. Unfortunately, Mackenzie had no time to cross to the island, to see whether it would swallow him.

The people met a little farther along were more attractive than those seen earlier, many of whom had been sick, while these were "healthy, full of flesh, and clean in their persons." Their ornaments and utensils did not differ greatly from those farther up the river. They had a little iron, which they obtained from the Eskimos; their arrows were made of very light wood, and winged with two feathers, while their bows were of Eskimo type, made of two pieces spliced with sinew. Their shirts were not cut square at the bottom, but tapered to a point from the belt downward as low as the knee, before and behind, and these points were fringed. Over the breast, back, and shoulders their shirts were also fringed, the fringe being ornamented with the stone of a berry, which was drilled

and run on each string of the fringe. The sleeves of the shirts were short and wide, and long mittens covered their hands and arms. Their leggings were like trousers, and the shoes sewed to the leggings.

These people told them that it would take ten more nights to reach the sea, but after three nights they would meet the Eskimo. The reports of some guns discharged as the canoes pushed off greatly alarmed the Indians, and the guide that they had hired at this place seemed inclined to leave them, until advised that the noise was a signal of friendship. The guide and two of his companions who accompanied them on their journey were merry fellows, singing not only their native songs, but others in imitation of the Eskimos. Not satisfied with singing, their guide proceeded to dance, and transferring himself to the white men's canoe, he danced in it, to their no small alarm lest it should be upset.

Mackenzie now began to be a little uneasy, for his provisions were growing scant, his hunters discouraged, and his men generally seemed anxious to return. Some of them declared that they must turn back, and the explorer was obliged to satisfy them by the assurance that he would go forward only seven days more, and if he did not then reach the sea, would return. They had now reached latitude  $68^{\circ}$ , and the sun was continually above the horizon. On the 11th they met an abandoned camp of Indians, where were seen parts of the fragments of three canoes, and places where oil had been spilt. Later, an Eskimo hut was found, and



about it a great deal of property. Now, they began to see fresh tracks of the Eskimos on the beach. According to their guide, they were approaching a large lake, where the Eskimos lived, and in which they killed large fish found there, which Mackenzie presumed must be whales. White bears, and other large animals not identified from the description, were told of, as well as the Eskimo canoes, which could conveniently carry four or five families.

On the 12th, in the morning, they landed where there were four huts. "The adjacent land is high and covered with short grass and flowers, though the earth was not thawed above four inches from the surface, beneath which was a solid body of ice. This beautiful appearance, however, was strongly contrasted with the ice and snow that was seen in the valleys. The soil, where there is any, is a yellow clay mixed with stones. These huts appear to have been abandoned during the last winter, and we had reason to think that some of the natives had been lately there, as the beach was covered with the tracks of their feet. Many of the runners and bars of their sledges were laid together near the houses in a manner that seemed to denote the return of the proprietors. There were also pieces of netting made of sinews, and some of bark of the willow. A thread of the former was platted, and no ordinary portion of time must have been employed in manufacturing so great a length of cord. A square stone kettle with a flat bottom also occupied our attention, which was capable of containing two gallons; and we



were puzzled as to the means these people must have employed to have chiselled it out of a solid rock into its present form."

When they had satisfied their curiosity they were about to re-embark, but were puzzled to know where they should go or what channel they should take. The lake was quite open to them to the westward, and the water very shallow, so much so that it was impossible to go very close to the shore. They therefore went to an island, where they camped, and, having set the net, Mackenzie and his interpreter climbed to the highest part of the island, from which they discovered solid ice, extending from the south-west by compass to the north and to the eastward. To the east were many islands.

As they passed along, on their walk of exploration, they came upon a number of white partridges, now becoming brown—the ptarmigan—and beautiful plover, which were breeding. There were also white owls, and presently they came upon an Eskimo grave.

Even the Indians and the Canadians, seeing that the time for turning back had almost come, began to regret that they must return without coming to the sea, not knowing that they were already upon it. For the next two or three nights they were several times obliged to move the baggage to keep the water from flowing about it, and at last Mackenzie concluded that this was the tide that was rising and falling. One morning many large animals were seen in the water, and Mackenzie recognized them as whales, and ordered the

canoe to start in pursuit. Fortunately, just at this time a fog arose and the whales were not overtaken. These were white whales, and, the Indian guide stated, were one of the principal sources of food for the Eskimo.

All Mackenzie's efforts to meet these northern people failed, and on Thursday, the 16th of July, the canoes entered the river and began the return journey. They were still subsisting largely on the wild fowl that the Indians killed and the fish that they took in their nets, and these were barely enough to support them. Indeed, on some days the wild fowl were so shy that they could not be approached, and this obliged them to draw more or less on their store of provisions. However, on the 18th, and before they had gotten away from the country of the Eskimos, the hunters killed two reindeer, a very fortunate addition to their supply of food. But this killing of the reindeer was not without its unfortunate side, for it so alarmed their guide that he deserted that night. However, geese were plenty, and on the following day the hunters killed twenty-two, and the next day fifteen, and four swans.

They were now obliged to resort to the laborious and slow towing-line to ascend the river. They met a party of Indians, among whom was the brother of the guide who had recently deserted, and Mackenzie sat up all night to watch them. They were greatly interested when they saw him writing, wondering what he was doing. As the night drew on, some women came from the forest to the camp, and after remaining for a short time, went away. "Those who remained immediately

kindled a small fire and layed themselves down to sleep around it, like so many whelps, having neither skins nor garments of any kind to cover them, notwithstanding the cold that prevailed. My people having placed their kettle of meat on the fire, I was obliged to guard it from the natives, who made several attempts to possess themselves of its contents; and this was the only instance I had hitherto discovered of their being influenced by a pilfering disposition. It might perhaps be a general opinion that provisions were a common property."

From here they continued to tow the canoe up the river. Some Indian huts seen were built of drift-wood. On the slope of the beach, and on the inside, earth was dug away to form a level floor. Within these huts were drying scaffolds, covered with split fish, and fires made in different parts of the hut warmed and dried the air, and hastened the operation of drying. The Indians, probably the Loucheux, an Athabaskan tribe, told him of the Eskimos who dressed like themselves, wore their hair short, and had two holes perforated, one on each side of the mouth, in line with the under lip, on which they placed long beads—the labrets, so well known as ornaments of the primitive Eskimos. They reported the animals of their country to be reindeer, bears, wolverines, martens, foxes, hares, and white buffaloes—white sheep (*Ovis dalli*)—and that the latter were only to be found in the mountains to the westward.

On the journey up the river the towing-line was much in use, but often, when the wind was north, it was

possible to use the sail. For six days on this southward journey the party had not touched any of their provision stores, but in this time, Mackenzie says, they had consumed two reindeer, four swans, forty-five geese, and a considerable quantity of fish. "I have always observed that the northmen possessed very hearty appetites, but they were much exceeded by those with me since we entered this river. I should really have thought it absolute gluttony in my people, if my own appetite had not increased in a similar proportion."

He now began to hear, from the people whom he met, of a great river to the west of the one he was travelling on, and beyond the mountains, perhaps the Yukon or the Fraser. But the country through which this river ran was inhabited by strange creatures. "The Indians represented them as being of gigantic stature and adorned with wings, which, however, they never employed in flying; that they fed on large birds, which they killed with the greatest ease, though common men would be certain victims of their voracity if they ventured to approach them. They also described the people that inhabited the mouth of the river as possessing the extraordinary power of killing with their eyes, and devouring a large beaver at a single meal. They added that canoes of very large dimensions visited that place. These tales, however, they told not of their own knowledge, but from reports of other tribes."

It was at this camp that Mackenzie was obliged to shoot an Indian dog, which it was impossible to keep

from interfering with his baggage, which, of course, contained the provisions. "It was in vain that I had remonstrated on this subject, so that I was obliged to commit the act which is just mentioned. When these people heard the report of the pistol, and saw the dog dead, they were seized with a very great alarm, and the women took the children on their backs and ran into the woods. I ordered the cause of this act of severity to be explained, with the assurance that no injuries would be offered to themselves. The woman, however, to whom the dog belonged was very much affected, and declared that the loss of five children during the preceding winter had not affected her so much as the death of this animal; but her grief was not of very long duration, and a few beads, etc., soon assuaged her sorrow."

On the way up the river, August 2, small springs of mineral water were observed, as well as lumps of iron ore, and finally a "coal mine," or bed of lignite, on fire. The beach was covered with coal, and the English Chief gathered some of it to be used as a black dye, to color porcupine quills. A little farther on the Indian hunters killed a beaver, whose fur was now beginning to grow long. Tracks of moose and reindeer were seen, but all of them old. Since the weather was growing cooler the reindeer would now leave the plains to come into the woods, for the mosquitoes were beginning to disappear. Though the river had fallen much the current was still very strong, and the work difficult. The weather was cold, and now their violent

exercise scarcely kept them warm. The women constantly remained in the canoes, making moose-skin moccasins for the men, who as constantly wore them out, a pair lasting not more than one day.

On the 7th they saw two reindeer on the beach before them, but the Indians, quarrelling to see which should be the first to get near them, alarmed the deer, which ran away. However, a female reindeer was killed, whose legs showed wounds, and it was supposed that she had been pursued by wolves, which devoured her young one. One of the young Indians took her udder, which was full of milk, and, squeezing it over some boiled corn, ate the mixture with great relish.

On the 10th, accompanied by one of his young Indians, Mackenzie strove without success to reach the mountains which were seen on the south-west of the river.

For the last few days the hunters had been unsuccessful, killing only a beaver, a few hares, and a few waterfowl, but on the 13th they reached the island where they had hidden their pemmican on the way down, and raising the cache, found themselves once more in plenty. A little later they saw another camp of Indians, who, very much frightened, drew their canoes up on the beach and fled to the woods, leaving much of their property behind them. This was pounced upon by Mackenzie's Indians, and he took his interpreter severely to task for their conduct. This brought on a more or less violent dispute, in the course of which the English Chief declared that he would accompany Mackenzie



no farther, but would leave him and remain here. The Indian and all his relations wept bitterly, but after a few hours Mackenzie persuaded him to continue the journey, and propitiated him by a gift of rum.

On the 17th and 18th of August the hunters were more successful, and on the last day the English Chief killed a buffalo, while a few water-fowl were brought in daily. They now found signs of a Cree encampment and presently reached the entrance of Slave Lake. Coasting around this, often in heavy weather, they came upon Mr. Le Roux, from the fort there, and found that he had been somewhat successful in trading for skins, having five packs, principally of marten. Large game seemed abundant here, and the tracks of buffalo, moose, and reindeer were seen. On August 30 they reached Mr. Le Roux's house.

Here Mackenzie's Indians left him, on the ground that he travelled too fast for them and that they feared they should be drowned if they followed so reckless a sailor. Mr. Le Roux's establishment was left on the 31st of August, and twelve days later, after many difficulties from storm and cold, they reached Fort Chipewyan, having concluded a voyage which had occupied one hundred and two days.



## CHAPTER VI

### ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

#### II

ON October 10, 1792, Alexander Mackenzie left Fort Chipewyan to proceed up Peace River, his purpose being to go up the stream so far as the season would permit, and, wintering wherever he must, to cross the mountains at its head and continue westward, if possible, to the Pacific Ocean.

Peace River takes its name from the settlement of their differences at Peace Point by the Knisteneaux and Beaver Indians. "When this country was formerly invaded by the Knisteneaux they found the Beaver Indians inhabiting the land about the Portage La Loche; and the adjoining tribes were those whom they called Slaves. They drove both these tribes before them, when the latter proceeded down the river from the Lake of the Hills, in consequence of which that part of it obtained the name of the Slave River. The former proceeded up the river, and when the Knisteneaux made peace with them, this place was settled to be the boundary."

As they proceeded, the weather was so cold and raw as to make travel unpleasant, but on the afternoon of

October 17 they reached the falls, where there were two considerable portages, and where they found recent fires, showing that the canoes that Mackenzie had despatched some days before were not far ahead.

On the 19th they reached what is termed the Old Establishment, an early fort, and found that the people preceding them had slept there the previous night, and had carelessly set the large house on fire. But for Mackenzie's arrival all the buildings would have been destroyed. On either side of Peace River here were extensive plains, which offered pasturage to great herds of buffalo.

The next morning they reached the fort, and were received with shouts of rejoicing and volleys from the guns, by the Indians, who now expected rum and a carouse. About three hundred Indians belonged here, who, though apparently Chipewyan by race, had adopted the manners and customs of their former enemies, the Crees. The contrast between the neat and decent appearance of the men and the very disagreeable looks of the women was striking. After staying here only long enough to give some advice and presents to the Indians and his instructions to Mr. Findlay, he kept on up the river. It was constantly growing colder and the ice gave some trouble, but on November 1 he reached the place where he expected to winter.

Two men had been sent forward in the spring to cut and square timber for the erection of a house, and about seventy Indians had joined them. The men had worked well, and prepared timber enough for a con-

siderable fort, as well as a ditch in which to set up the palisades of a stockade. Experience at the Old Establishment had shown that many vegetables would grow well in this soil and climate, but this was no time to think about gardening. What was more important was the fact that the plains on either side of the river abounded in buffalo, elk, wolves, foxes, and bears, while a ridge of highlands or mountains to the westward was inhabited by great numbers of deer, being called Deer Mountain.

As with all traders, Mackenzie's first business was to call the Indians together and give them some rum, tobacco, and advice. They listened to the advice, drank the rum, and smoked the tobacco, promising everything that he asked.

On the 22d of November—although the side-head giving the date in the printed volume says December—the river froze up, so that the hunters had a bridge on which to cross. Game was plenty, yet but for this means of crossing the stream they might have suffered from lack of food. It was here the practice of medicine was forced on Mackenzie. By means of simple remedies and by close personal attention to each case he cured a number of severe ailments among the Indians.

Of one of these he says: "On my arrival here last fall, I found that one of the young Indians had lost the use of his right hand by the bursting of a gun, and that his thumb had been maimed in such a manner as to hang only by a small strip of flesh. Indeed, when he was brought to me his wound was in such an offen-

sive state and emitted such a putrid smell that it required all the resolution I possessed to examine it. His friends had done everything in their power to relieve him, but as it consisted only in singing about him and blowing upon his hand, the wound, as may be well imagined, had got into the deplorable state in which I found it. I was rather alarmed at the difficulty of the case, but as the young man's life was in a state of hazard, I was determined to risk my surgical reputation, and accordingly took him under my care. I immediately formed a poultice of bark, stripped from the roots of the spruce fir, which I applied to the wound, having first washed it with the juice of the bark. This proved a very painful dressing. In a few days, however, the wound was clean and the proud flesh around it destroyed. I wished very much in this state of the business to have separated the thumb from the hand, which I well knew must be effected before the cure could be performed, but he would not consent to that operation till, by the application of vitriol, the flesh by which the thumb was suspended was shrivelled almost to a thread. When I had succeeded in this object I perceived that the wound was closing rather faster than I had desired. The salve I applied on the occasion was made of the Canadian balsam, wax, and tallow dropped from a burning candle into water. In short, I was so successful that about Christmas my patient engaged in an hunting party, and brought me the tongue of an elk; nor was he finally ungrateful. When he left me I received the warmest acknowledg-

ments, both from himself and the relations with whom he departed, for my care of him. I certainly did not spare my time or attention on the occasion, as I regularly dressed the wound three times a day during the course of a month."

Just before Christmas, Mackenzie moved from his tent into his house, and now began the erection of houses for the men. Long before this the thermometer had been down far below zero, yet the men had been lying out in the cold and snow without any shelter except an open shed. "It would be considered by the inhabitants of a milder climate as a great evil to be exposed to the weather at this rigorous season of the year, but these people are inured to it, and it is necessary to describe in some measure the hardships which they undergo without a murmur, in order to convey a general notion of them.

"The men who were now with me left this place in the beginning of last May and went to the Rainy Lake in canoes, laden with packs of fur, which, from the immense length of the voyage and other occurring circumstances, is a most severe trial of patience and perseverance; there they do not remain a sufficient time for ordinary repose, when they take a load of goods in exchange, and proceed on their return, in a great measure, day and night. They had been arrived near two months, and all that time had been continually engaged in very toilsome labor, with nothing more than a common shed to protect them from the frost and snow. Such is the life which these people lead, and is con-

tinued with unremitting exertion till their strength is lost in premature old age."

Mackenzie was now receiving plenty of beaver from the Indians. But, on the other hand, he was not without the usual annoyances to which the fur trader was exposed. The Indians showed a tendency to quarrel among themselves, especially over their gambling at the platter game, which is a sort of throwing of dice, the same, apparently, as the seed game, so common among all the Indians of the plains. On the whole, however, the winter passed quietly and geese were seen on the 13th of March.

In closing his account of this winter, passed high up on Peace River, Mackenzie gives some account of the Beaver and Rock Mountain Indians living there, who, he says, did not exceed 150 men capable of bearing arms. As late as 1786, when the first traders from Canada arrived on the banks of the Peace River, the natives employed bows and snares, but since then they had become well armed, bows were little used, and snares were unknown. These Indians were excellent hunters and such hard workers in the field that they were extremely lean, being always in the best of training. When a relation died the men blackened the face, cut off their hair, and gashed their arms with knives and arrows. The women often cut off a finger at the death of a favorite son, husband, or father. The Indians told of a time when no timber grew on the hills and plains along Peace River, but they were covered with moss, and the reindeer was the only animal. As the



timber spread on them, elk and buffalo made their appearance, and the reindeer retired to the range of highlands called Deer Mountain.

The month of April passed, and early in May MacKenzie loaded six canoes with the furs and provisions he had purchased, and despatched them to Fort Chipewyan. He, however, retained six of the men, who agreed to accompany him up Peace River on his western voyage of discovery, and left his winter interpreter and another person in charge of the fort, to supply the natives with their ammunition during the summer. On the 9th day of May he embarked in a canoe twenty-five feet long, loaded with about 3,000 pounds of provisions, goods for presents, arms, ammunition, and baggage, and ten persons, two of whom were hunters and interpreters.

The first day's journey was through an interesting and beautiful country. "From the place which we quitted this morning the west side of the river displayed a succession of the most beautiful scenery I had ever beheld. The ground rises at intervals to a considerable height and stretches inward to a considerable distance; at every interval or pause in the rise there is a very gently ascending space or lawn, which is alternate with abrupt precipices to the summit of the whole, or, at least, as far as the eye could distinguish. This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it; groves of poplars in every shape vary the scene, and their intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elks and buffaloes, the former choosing the steeps and uplands, and



the latter preferring the plains. At this time the buffaloes were attended with their young ones, who were frisking about them; and it appeared that the elks would soon exhibit the same enlivening circumstance. The whole country displayed an exuberant verdure; the trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful appearance, and the velvet rind of their branches reflecting the oblique rays of a rising or setting sun, added a splendid gaiety to the scene, which no expressions of mine are qualified to describe. The east side of the river consists of a range of high land covered with the white spruce and the soft birch, while the banks abound with the alder and the willow. The water continued to rise, and the current being proportionately strong, we made a greater use of setting poles than paddles."

On the following days camps of Beaver Indians were seen, and Mackenzie was somewhat anxious lest they should encourage his hunters to desert, but this did not take place. Game continued abundant, and on the 13th they saw along the river tracks of large bears, some of which were nine inches wide. "We saw one of their dens, or winter quarters, called watee, in an island, which was ten feet deep, five feet high, and six feet wide, but we had not yet seen one of those animals. The Indians entertain great apprehension of this kind of bear which is called the grisly bear, and they never venture to attack it but in a party of at least three or four."

The land on both sides of the river was high and irregular, and the banks and the rocky cliffs exhibited

strata of red, green, and yellow colors. "Some parts, indeed, offer a beautiful scenery, in some degrees similar to that which we passed on the second day of our voyage, and equally enlivened with the elk and the buffalo, who were feeding in great numbers and unmolested by the hunter." The next day they passed a river, of the mouth of which Mackenzie says: "This spot would be an excellent situation for a fort or factory, as there is plenty of wood and every reason to believe that the country abounds in beaver. As for the other animals, they are in evident abundance, as in every direction the elk and the buffalo are seen in possession of the hills and the plains." Two elks were killed and a buffalo wounded that day. The land above their camp spread out in an extensive plain, gradually rising to a high ridge, chiefly grassy, and dotted with poplar and white birch trees. "The country is so crowded with animals as to have the appearance, in some places, of a stall-yard, from the state of the ground and the quantity of dung which is scattered over it. The soil is black and light. We this day saw two grisly and hideous bears."

Although the ascent of the river had not been easy and they had frequently been obliged to unload and repair their canoe, it was not until Sunday, the 19th, that they met rapids and cascades, which presented greater difficulties. The canoe was heavily laden, the current enormously swift, and broken constantly by rocks and shoals; the only means of advance was by the tow-line, and the beach was often narrow or wanting.

At the beginning of this very difficult stretch of water they found several islands of solid rock with but little soil upon them, the rock worn away near the water's surface, but unworn higher up, so that the islands presented, as it were, so many large tables, each of which was supported by a pedestal of a more circumscribed projection. On these islands geese were breeding.

Carrying over short distances, often crossing the river in a very swift water, in constant danger from the great stones which frequently fell from the banks above, and much of the time in the water, they pursued their way for a short distance over this very difficult passage. The work was terribly hard, and as far as they could see up the river there was no improvement of the channel. Therefore, Mackenzie sent out a party of six men to explore, and on their return that same night they reported that it was necessary to make a long carry—nine miles they said—before smooth water would be met with. The canoe was therefore unloaded, the baggage carried up to the top of the bank above the river, and then the canoe was fairly hauled up to the same height. There they camped. In two days' march from this place, carrying the load and the canoe, they again met quiet water.

The journal for Thursday, the 23d, enumerates the different sorts of trees which they saw, among which is named *bois-picant*, a tree which Mackenzie had not seen before, but which was apparently the west-coast shrub—the devil's club, which grows in a few places on the eastern slope of the Continental Divide. Although

he did not know it, Mackenzie was now quite close to the summit of the Rocky Mountains.

The river here was wide, flowing in great volume, and very swiftly but smooth. There were many animals in the country, for their tracks were seen everywhere; and when Mackenzie left a bundle of presents on a pole, as a good-will offering to any natives who might pass by, one of his Indians added to the bundle a small, round piece of green wood, chewed at one end to form a brush, such as the Indians use to pick out the marrow from bones. This was the sign of a country with many animals in it. At a number of points along the river they had found places where wood had been chopped with axes, showing that the Indians who had passed along here had had intercourse with the whites.

They were now flanked on both sides by high mountains covered with snow, and the cold was so severe that the men, although working hard, could not get along without their blanket coats. On the last day of May the men were so cold that they landed in order to kindle a fire.

Their great labor, so long continued, had made Mackenzie's people more or less discontented. They were tired of the journey and anxious to get back. Moreover, some wanted to go in one direction and some in another, and the forking of the river gave rise to open grumbling. However, Mackenzie handled them well, and they went on. On the 1st of June he says: "In no part of the Northwest did I see so much beaver-work within an equal distance as in the course of this day.

In some places they had cut down several acres of large poplars; and we saw also a great number of these active and sagacious animals. The time which these wonderful creatures allot for their labors, whether in erecting their curious habitations or providing food, is the whole of the interval between the setting and the rising sun."

Ever since they had started the water in the river had been rising, since, of course, the advancing summer was melting the snows in the neighboring mountains and swelling all the streams. On the 5th of June Mackenzie left the canoe and ascending a high hill or mountain crossed the country, and climbing a tree looked ahead. He saw little that was interesting, and on returning to the river could see nothing of the canoe. Made anxious by this, he went forward to see if it was ahead, sending others of his people back to look for it. He had no food, and was preparing to lie out during the night when a shot from Mr. Mackay and the Indian who had been sent back announced that the canoe had been discovered. His people excused their slow progress by saying that their canoe had been damaged and that the travel had been harder than on any previous day, and Mackenzie pretended to believe them. The difficulties of the way were indeed great. The current was so strong that paddles could not be used, so deep that the poles were useless, while the bank of the river was so lined with willows and other trees that it was impossible to pass the line. The water was still rising and the current growing stronger. In spite of all

these impediments they pushed on, and were already beginning to look for the carrying-place, where they should cross the mountains to the stream which ran toward the Pacific.

On Sunday, June 9, they noticed a small fire, and in a short time heard people in the timber, as if in a state of confusion. The Indians were frightened by the discovery of the explorer's party, and the explorer's party were not a little alarmed for fear they should be attacked. Very judiciously Mackenzie turned his canoe off to the opposite side of the river, and before they were half-way across two men appeared on the rising ground opposite them, brandishing their spears, displaying bows and arrows, and shouting. The interpreter called to the Indians, telling them that the white people were friendly, yet the Indians preserved a threatening attitude, but after some talk consented to the landing of the party, though evidently very much frightened. They laid aside their weapons, and when Mackenzie stepped forward and shook hands with each of them, one of them, trembling with fear, drew his knife from his sleeve and offered it to Mackenzie as a mark of submission.

These Indians had heard of white men before, but had never seen any, and were extremely curious as well as suspicious. They had but just reached here and had not yet made their camp, but on the discovery of Mackenzie's party had run away, leaving their property behind.

The explorer made a great effort to conciliate and to



attach them to him, and during the day the whole party of Indians came in, three men, three women, and seven or eight boys and girls. They were delighted with the beads which were given them, and seemed to enjoy the pemmican, their own provision consisting entirely of dried fish. They possessed some iron, which they said they obtained from people distant about eleven days' march, and that those people travelled for a month to reach the country of other tribes, who lived in houses and who extended their journeys to the Stinking Lake, or the ocean, where they traded with white people, who came in boats as large as islands.

This account discouraged Mackenzie, who feared that the end of his journey was far distant. However, he continued his efforts to lull the suspicions of the Indians, and treated them and their children with especial kindness. The next day, sitting about the fire and listening to the talk of the Indians and interpreters, some portion of which he could understand, he recognized that one of the Indians spoke of a great river flowing near the source of the one which they were ascending, and of portages leading to a small river, which discharged into the great river; and a little patient work led the Indian to describe what seemed a practicable route toward the ocean.

These Indians were of low stature, not exceeding five feet six or seven inches, lean, round-faced, with pierced noses and loose-hanging hair. They wore robes of the skins of the beaver, the ground-hog, or the reindeer, dressed with the hair on. Their leggings and mocca-



sins were of dressed moose, elk, or reindeer skin. They wore collars of grizzly-bear claws. Their cedar bows were six feet in length, and bore a short iron spike on one end, and so might be used as a spear or lance. They also carried lances headed with iron or bone. Their knives and axes were of iron. They made lines of rawhide, which were fine and strong, while their nets and fishing-lines were of willow bark and nettles. Their hooks were of bone set in wood, their kettles of basketry, their spoons of horn or wood. Their canoes were made of spruce bark. Among certain presents given Mackenzie before he parted from these people were a net made of nettles and "a white horn in the shape of a spoon, which resembles the horn of the buffalo of the Coppermine River"—by which undoubtedly is meant the musk-ox—"but their description of the animal to which it belonged does not answer to that." This horn was probably that of a mountain sheep.

With a guide engaged from these people Mackenzie pushed on, promising the Indians that he would return in two months. The journey up the river was difficult, and the canoe by this time was in bad shape, so that a little jar caused it to leak, and repairs were frequent. At length they left the main stream, by the instruction of the guide, who declared that it began only a short distance away, having its origin in a great valley which was full of snow, the melting of which supplied the river. The branch which they went up was only about ten yards broad and the one they now entered still narrower. The current was slow, and the channel so

crooked that it was sometimes difficult to work the canoe. Soon they entered a small lake choked with drift-wood, and camped at an old Indian camp. Beaver were abundant here, as were swans and geese, but they killed none of them, for fear of alarming any natives by the discharge of fire-arms. This Mackenzie regarded as the highest source of the Peace River.

At the head of the lake they found a carry where there was a beaten path, about eight hundred yards long, to another small lake. From here two streams were seen tumbling down the rocks from the right and emptying into the lake that they had left, while two others, falling from the opposite side, poured into the lake they were approaching. Now they had crossed the Continental Divide, and instead of fighting with the current they would be going down the stream. We may imagine something of what Mackenzie's feelings must have been when he had surmounted the Divide and saw before him a direct passage to the western ocean. But his troubles were by no means over.

From the lake they passed into a small river, full of wood which had slipped down the mountain side, and which constantly obstructed the way. At first there was scarcely water enough to float the canoe, but the water grew deeper, and toward evening they entered another lake. Its outlet was very swift, and they had difficulty in keeping the canoe from being driven against the trees which had fallen across it.

Men sent ahead down the river to report on its practicability came back with terrible stories of rapids, fallen

trees, and large stones. The guide was now very uncomfortable, and wished to return, but this, of course, was not permitted.

After carrying around the nearest obstacles they pushed off again, but the force of the current was so great as to drive the canoe sideways down the river again and break her. Mackenzie and the men jumped overboard, but before they could straighten her course or stop her they came to deeper water, and were obliged to re-embark, one man being left behind in the river. Almost immediately they drove against a rock, which shattered the stern of the canoe, and now the vessel darted to the other side of the river and the bow was smashed as well as the stern. The foreman tried to check her by holding to branches of a tree, but was pulled out of the canoe and ashore. A moment later she struck some rocks, which broke several large holes in the bottom, and in a moment every one was overboard trying to hold up the wreck. The strength of the current, however, forced them down the stream several hundred yards, but at last the vessel was guided into shallow water, and an eddy, and there stopped and dragged to shore. In a short time the man that they had left behind joined them, and they were now able to see what their condition was. They had lost some of their baggage and the whole of their stock of balls, but they still had some lead in the form of shot, from which bullets might be made. The men were frightened and anxious to get back, but a liberal dose of rum with a hearty meal and some encouraging words from their



MACKENZIE AND THE MEN JUMPED OVERBOARD.



leader quieted their fears, and made them willing to go on. Men were sent off to look for bark with which to repair the canoe and also to look for the main river, which their guide told them was not far distant. These men came back with unsatisfactory reports, declaring that the river they were following was quite impracticable, while they had not been able to see the other larger river.

The next day the canoe, having been repaired, was lightened and a part of the men took her slowly down the river, while the remainder carried the baggage along the shore. It was evident that this stream could not be followed much farther, and again exploring parties were sent out to see if the great river could not be found. They saw it, but declared that to reach it would be very difficult. That night Mackenzie, as usual, sat up to watch the guide, so that he should not desert, but Mr. Mackay, who relieved him, permitted the man to slip away, and he was not seen again. The river that they were descending became more and more swift and rough, and was, in fact, wholly impracticable. It was now determined to cut a way for the canoe across a neck of the land, and at eight o'clock that night they had the inexpressible satisfaction of finding themselves "on the bank of a navigable river on the western side of the first great range of mountains."

Rain the next morning postponed their start until eight o'clock, when they were on the water and driven by a strong current, which, though it carried them along swiftly, was perfectly safe, since the river seemed

deep. The stream was constantly joined by other rivers, and after a time it broadened out and the current became slow, so that they proceeded with more deliberation. An Indian cabin of recent construction was seen on the shore, and toward night a smoke on the bank indicated natives.



## CHAPTER VII

### ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

#### III

THE next day the forests seemed to be on fire, since clouds of thick smoke rose from the wood with a strong odor of burning resin. On the afternoon of June 19 they saw smoke on the shore, but before they could reach land the natives had deserted their camp. Mackenzie sent his Indians after them, but they were threatening and discharged five arrows which, however, did no harm. They had left some property behind them which the men desired to take with them. A few things were taken and some useful implements were left in exchange. The next morning they were off early in a fog, and saw two "red deer" at the edge of the water. Another was seen and might have been killed, but for the dog which frightened it. These, Mackenzie says, are "not so large as the elk of the Peace River, but are the real red deer, which I never saw in the north, though I have been told that they are to be found in great numbers in the plains." Here the natives had stripped the bark from many of the spruce-trees, presumably to roof their cabins. A

house was seen thirty feet long and twenty wide, evidently intended for occupation by more than one family.

The constant accidents to which their canoe had been subjected, and the carrying it from place to place, had so racked and broken it that it seemed almost hopeless to go farther in it. On Friday, the 22d, Mackenzie, recognizing the possibility that on his return he might have nothing to eat, made a cache of ninety pounds of pemmican in a deep hole, over which a fire was built.

The next day, as they went on, they saw a small canoe drawn up to the edge of the woods, and soon after another came out from a small river. The man who was in it called to his friends, who at once appeared on the bank, armed with bows, arrows and spears. Although they were evidently much alarmed, they were very threatening in their gestures, and let fly a volley of arrows, which did no harm. Mackenzie landed on the other side of the river and stopped there, his interpreters trying to pacify the Indians, but without success. Two men went off in a canoe down the river, apparently to procure assistance. Mackenzie, now having taken the precaution to send one of his Indians with a gun into the woods to keep within easy reach of them and to shoot any one who might attack him, walked along the beach and invited the Indians to come over and see him, while his interpreter declared to them that these people were his friends. At length two natives came over in a canoe, but stopped a hundred yards from the shore. Mackenzie signalled to them to come to land, showing them various articles which

might be attractive, such as looking-glasses, beads, and other things. Very slowly they drew nearer to the shore, but at first would not venture to land. At last they came near enough to get some beads, and were persuaded to come ashore and to sit down. It was found that his interpreters could talk with these people, but though Mackenzie tried to persuade them to come to his canoe they did not wish to, and asked his permission to go back to their own side of the river. This he granted, and their return to their friends was evidently a matter of great rejoicing, while the articles that they took back with them were examined with the greatest curiosity. After a little time the white men were asked to come over to their side, which they did. The Indians were still timid, but the distribution of a few trinkets among them and a little sugar to the children seemed to strengthen their confidence.

These people reported that the river ran to the south and that at its mouth white people were said to be building houses. There were rapids and falls and also very terrible people along the shores; people who lived in underground houses, and who might do them great harm. The night was spent here.

Still travelling in his crazy canoe, Mackenzie kept on. Before long he came to a camp, the Indians of which, as usual, threatened, but the new friends made the day before soon set their fears at rest. Among the Indians here was a Rocky Mountain captive, taken by the Crees, who had carried her across the mountains, but she had escaped from them, and in the effort to

return to her own people had been captured by the tribe with whom she was now living. As he saw more and more of these natives he found not a few people from the Rocky Mountains with whom his own hunters could perfectly well converse, and under these circumstances he did everything in his power to learn about the course of the river down which he was passing. There was evidently a considerable trade between the coast and the upper country, for iron, brass, copper, and beads were had from the west.

Mackenzie now had remaining about thirty days' provisions, and not more than one hundred and fifty balls, with about thirty pounds of shot, which also might be used for balls, though with considerable waste. He was somewhat doubtful what to do, not only on account of the shortness of his supplies, but because of the great length of time that it would take him to journey to the sea and return. If he went to the coast by this river it would seem impossible to reach Athabaska the same season. He now called a council and asked the advice of his people, saying that he wished to try to reach the ocean overland, because he thought it would be a saving of time, but declared that he would not attempt to do this, but would go by water unless they would agree that if the land journey proved impracticable they would return with him and continue the voyage to the discharge of the waters, whatever the distance might be. The men were most loyal, and all declared that they would follow him wherever he should go. He now set out to go back up the river to that point

which should seem nearest to the seashore. Their guide preferred to travel on the shore, and although Mackenzie did not greatly like this, he thought it unwise to oppose him. The next day, as some of the men were walking along the shore with the guide, they met some Indians who threatened them. The guide ran away, and Mackenzie's people kept with him. Finally the guide escaped from them and the people returned to their leader. Every one was now greatly alarmed, no one understanding what had happened, nor why the Indians were frightened, or enraged, whichever it might be. Mackenzie's people were absolutely panic-stricken, and it was all he could do to hold them together. They selected a position calculated for defence and distributed arms and ammunition.

Now followed a time of great anxiety. A young woman came to the camp, but they could secure no information from her. That night an old blind man was captured, returning to the house, having been driven from his hiding-place in the woods by hunger. He was fed and well treated and soon gained confidence. Occasionally an Indian was seen on the river in a canoe, but none of them would approach nor reply to any calls. At length, Mackenzie decided to leave this place and to continue up the river. The canoe was absolutely unfit for service, and one man was kept bailing all the time, to keep her afloat. On the 27th they stopped at an island where there seemed to be on the mainland trees which would furnish the proper material for a new canoe, and here they stopped

and built one. Here, too, their guide, who had deserted them at the time of the panic, returned, claiming great credit for keeping the promise that he had earlier made to them. On the 1st of July, however, he left them again, with his companions, and went up the river. The old man they still had with them, but he was anxious to get away. The canoe having been completed and proving serviceable, they started up the river from this island, which they had named Canoe Island. It now seemed necessary to reduce the rations, again cutting the people down to two meals a day, which they did not at all like. Their food now consisted chiefly of the dried roes of fish, boiled with a little flour and grain, so as to make a substantial and not unpleasant dish. At Canoe Island flies had been very troublesome, so that Mackenzie says, "During our stay there we had been most cruelly tormented by flies, particularly by sand-flies, which I am disposed to consider as the most tormenting insect of its kind in nature."

The way up the river was difficult, often impracticable for paddles, and it was hard to use a tow-line on account of the steepness of the banks. On July 3 they reached a point which answered to the description of the place where they should leave the stream to go overland to the west, and here a river came in, which Mackenzie calls West Road River. Some of the men thought it would be better to keep on up the stream a little farther, in the hope of finding an easier crossing, although at this point there was a beaten trail. They



proceeded, therefore, and before long met their guide, who apparently had twice deserted. He was accompanied by some other Indians, called Nascud Denee, who were friendly, and who declared that from their village, a little farther up the stream, the road to the sea was short.

On reaching the place where they were to leave the river, Mackenzie cached some pemmican, wild rice, Indian corn, powder, and trade goods, and also took the canoe out of the water, placed it bottom up on a platform and protected it as well as possible. They now started on their foot journey, carrying about four hundred pounds of pemmican, the instruments, some goods, and their arms and ammunition.

The journey westward was slow and difficult. They met many people, all of whom were friendly, and when their guide left them, as he did in a day or two, they succeeded in procuring other guides for short distances from the various villages that they passed, and went forward with comparatively little difficulty, although the almost continuous rain was unpleasant enough. The people whom they met as they proceeded showed more and more evidences of intercourse with the whites, having a number of articles obtained by trade. Most of these people seemed to belong to different small tribes of Athabaskan stock. They seemed less and less surprised at the appearance of the white men and, while still more or less astonished at their fire-arms, did not appear to be frightened by the explosions. Game was so scarce that practically none was



killed, their provisions being largely fish, obtained from the natives or caught by themselves. The killing one day of two eagles and three gray partridges is important enough to be mentioned.

Mackenzie describes in considerable detail some of the houses of the Indians which he passed. He notes also, on July 14, that he had reached a place where it is the practice of the Indians to burn the bodies of their dead. On the 15th they fell in with a village of particularly clean and attractive people, who were on their way to the sea with articles for trade with the white people. They said that in view of the fact that the women and children with them could not travel fast it would be three days before they could reach the end of their journey. This was welcome news to the explorer.

Before they had gone very far, however, these people changed their minds, and determined to go to the sea by a different and somewhat longer route, and so the white men separated from them, having procured guides from four new Indians, who had just joined the party and belonged to a tribe Mackenzie had not yet seen.

The way was difficult, full of swamps and fallen timber. Ground-hogs were seen, and a number of them captured, and before long a deer was killed. They were now high up in the mountains, and were marching through the snow. The country became very rough and they travelled along precipices, while snow-covered peaks frowned on them from above. On these mountains, according to their guides, were many ani-

mals, which, "from their description, must be wild goats." The timber grew very large.

On this day their guide hurried ahead, leaving the laden white people to follow, and when it grew dark the men were anxious to stop for the night, but Mackenzie pushed on, and at last reached a village where he saw fires with people cooking over them. He entered a house and shook hands, and the people directed him to go to a large house, where he was cordially received and fed with roasted salmon. A little later they were regaled on salmon roes, pounded fine, beaten up and flavored with something bitter, which we may conjecture to have been soap ollalie. The natives here were capturing salmon with their dip nets and by weirs. They were kindly and hospitable, and had very strong beliefs and feelings with regard to their fish. Mackenzie declared that they never taste flesh, and that one of their dogs having swallowed part of a bone left at the camp-fire was beaten by his master till he disgorged it. A bone having been thrown into the river by one of Mackenzie's people, a young man dived, brought it up and put it in the fire, and then proceeded to wash his polluted hands. The chief of the tribe declined to let the white men have a canoe because they had with them some deer meat, which, if put in the canoe on their river, would cause the fish to leave the river, so that the people must starve. Mackenzie asked what he should do with the meat, and the Indian told him to give it to a native present who belonged to a tribe of flesh eaters. The canoe was then loaned them.

These people seemed to belong to a different family from the Chipewyans; at least Mackenzie says their language appeared to have no resemblance to that of the Atnahs. Seven natives with two canoes took the explorers and their baggage down the river. They travelled fast, and the skill of the Indians greatly impressed Mackenzie, who says: "I had imagined that the Canadians who accompanied me were the most expert canoe men in the world, but they are very inferior to these people, as they themselves acknowledge, in conducting those vessels."

Just above a village the whole party landed, the Indians preceding the white men to announce their approach. When they reached the village they found it in a turmoil, the natives armed and rushing about apparently in a great state of alarm. There was nothing to do except to face the music, and Mackenzie walked boldly forward into the midst of the village, when most of the people laid aside their arms and came forward to meet them. He shook hands with those nearest to him, when suddenly an elderly man broke through the crowd and embraced him, as did also a younger man, the chief's son. Another son of the old chief approached, and as Mackenzie stepped forward to shake hands with him the younger fellow broke the string of a handsome robe of sea-otter skin which he had on and put it over Mackenzie's shoulders. The chief took Mackenzie to his house, and treated him in a most hospitable manner. He was offered a dish made of the dried inner bark of the hemlock tree, soaked in fresh

salmon oil. Food was plenty here, for the salmon run was at its height. Fish were drying on lines strung all about the village. These people were also very careful that nothing should be done to alarm their fish. They objected to water being taken from the river in an iron kettle, on the ground that the salmon disliked the smell of iron. Wooden boxes for holding water were given the explorers, however. Here were seen panels made of thick cedar boards, neatly joined and painted with hieroglyphics and figures of different animals, such as are commonly seen on the coast.

Here Mackenzie was obliged to do some doctoring, and he describes the methods of the native physicians in treating their patients.

Mackenzie had several times asked the chief for canoes to take the party to the sea, but his requests had received little attention. When, however, he tried to take an observation the chief objected, not, apparently, because the natives were afraid of the instruments, but because their use might frighten the salmon from that part of the river. Just as they were about to embark in the large canoe, forty-five feet long, four feet wide, and three and a half feet in depth, it was discovered that an axe was missing, and there was a short halt. Mackenzie's resolution procured the return of the axe, and they went on. Villages were seen along the river, and once or twice they stopped. The people they passed seemed to have more and more articles of European manufacture, and they treated Mackenzie very well. On the evening of this day, at a village

where they stopped, Mackenzie says, "I could perceive, personally, the termination of the river and its discharge into an arm of the sea."

The Indians now seemed unwilling to go farther, but two of them were persuaded to keep on, and, taking another canoe, about eight o'clock on Saturday, July 20, they left the river and reached an arm of the sea. The tide was out, and the large mud flats, seaweed covered, were bare. Gulls, eagles, and ducks were seen. The weather was boisterous, and before long they put ashore in a cove for the night. One of the young natives here deserted, but, being pursued, was brought back. Since they had left the river porpoises and sea-otter—or seals—had been continually in sight. Fresh water was had from streams running down the mountains, and just after dark the young chief from up the river came into camp with a large porcupine, which was eagerly devoured by the half-starved men. The next day they came across three canoes with fifteen people, one of whom seemed to have had some trouble with white men not long before. The people they now met were somewhat annoying, for they begged, pilfered, and seemed to wish to see everything that the white men possessed. They constantly spoke of a white man named Macubah, very likely meaning Vancouver, and for the negative distinctly answered "No, no."

On the face of a rock at this point Mackenzie inscribed, with vermilion, a brief note, "Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the 22d July, 1793."

Here also he was able to establish his position with some exactness, and this done he started to return. At a village near the mouth of the river a number of people rushed toward Mackenzie, apparently about to attack him, and it seemed that these were the ones who had been fired on by the white people not long before. Mackenzie stood ready with his gun, and the Indians, seeing his attitude, dropped their knives. There was something of a scuffle, though Mackenzie was uninjured, and the Indians made off with his hat and cloak. After a little while, the young chief returning, explained that the men belonging to the canoes which had met them below in an inlet, had declared that the white people had killed four of their party. An explanation that this statement was false brought about a hollow truce, but relations were still somewhat strained. The Indians brought them food, however, and gave them setting poles, all of which were paid for.

Mackenzie's people were very much frightened, and were determined to leave the canoe and to start on foot over the mountains. So firm was this resolution that they threw everything that they had, except their blankets, into the river. Mackenzie, however, with his usual patience and resolution, set to work to guide them in the right way, and declaring that, now he had accomplished his object, he had no other object but the common safety, that he wished to return in the easiest and safest way, and that one of their party was sick and could not travel, and that they must stay with



him. The result of this was that his people agreed that they would continue to follow him; but several of them declared that they would not again enter the canoe, of which they were much afraid. Five men, therefore, including Mackenzie and the sick Indian, entered the canoe, and made their slow way up the river. When they came in sight of a house they saw the young Indian, who had left them a day or two before, coming toward them with six people in a canoe. This encouraged them, as showing that the natives who had been spreading here reports about them had not been listened to. At this village they were treated well. At the main village above, the old chief received them as cordially as before, and fed them on fish and berries.

Farther up the river it appeared that a sick man, to whom Mackenzie had given some simple remedy, had died, and it was feared that the death might have been attributed to this remedy. Above this point they again took to the trail. They were very suspicious of the Indians, as the Indians were of them, and were constantly alarmed; and a panic in one party was succeeded by a panic in the other. At other villages they were kindly received, and various presents were given them, and Mackenzie devotes many pages to a description of the habits of these people. When they left the friendly village each man carried about twenty pounds of fish, and they also had a little flour and some pemmican. The sick Indian was slightly better, but could not travel fast, and in crossing rapids or difficult streams Mackenzie carried him on his back.



It was now the last of July, the weather was warmer, the grass green, and the wild fruits ripe. High up on the mountains, though, the snow still clung, and the frost was hard. They were now marching fast, and as they went along they recovered from time to time the provisions that they had hid on their westward journey. On the 4th of August they reached the place where they had left their canoe, and found all their property in good order. There was not a footprint near their cache. The Indians whom they met near at hand were frightened at first, but soon became friendly. Notwithstanding the fact that they had left the property of the explorer absolutely untouched, they took away from the camp a variety of small articles, which Mackenzie recovered by informing them that the salmon, which was their favorite food and necessary to their existence, came from the sea which belonged to the white men, and that since at the entrance of the river it was possible to prevent those fish from coming up it, the white man possessed the power to starve the Indians and their children. "To avert our anger, therefore, they must return all the articles which had been stolen from us. This finesse succeeded."

On the 6th of August, they embarked in their canoe on their return journey. The stream was full of salmon, and the work of pushing up the river was slow and difficult, but they were on the march toward home. Rains were frequent, but not long continued. On the 15th they reached the place where the canoe had been wrecked on the 13th of June, and made unsuccessful

search for the bag of balls then lost. The following day they came to the Continental Divide, and it was here that Mackenzie had the thought of transferring some living salmon from the head of the Columbia to that of the Peace River. But, like most of his men, he was now in pretty bad condition from privation, excessive labor and cold, and he was unable to carry out the desire. On the 17th they carried across from the little lake to Peace River, and started down that stream. The passage was swift, and on the 18th they went down in one day what it had taken them seven to come up.

They were now again reduced to a short allowance of food, and Mr. Mackay and the Indians were sent ahead to try and kill something, while the remainder of the party began to repair the canoe and to carry the baggage around the rapid, which, on their ascent, they had called Rocky Mountain Portage. About sunset Mr. Mackay returned with the flesh of a buffalo, and we may imagine the sensations of these northmen when they again put their teeth into this familiar food. The journey down the river continued swift, and they were careful to land at the head of each rapids and inspect it, but the canoe being light they passed over most places without difficulty. The hunters killed fat meat, and Mackenzie gives an idea of the appetites by saying that, in three meals, ten people and a dog ate up an elk.

On the 23d they were passing through a beautiful country full of buffalo, and on this day they killed a buffalo and a bear. On the 24th of August they rounded

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a point and came in view of the fort. "We threw out our flag and accompanied it with a general discharge of fire-arms, while the men were in such spirits, and made such an active use of their paddles, that we arrived before the two men whom we left here in the spring could recover their senses to answer us. Thus we landed at four in the afternoon at the place which we left on the 9th of May. Here my voyages of discovery terminate. Their toils and their dangers, their solitudes and sufferings have not been exaggerated in my descriptions. . . . I received, however, the reward of my labors, for they were crowned with success."

## CHAPTER VIII

### LEWIS AND CLARK

#### I

**M**OST famous of all the pathfinders of the United States are Lewis and Clark, explorers of the Missouri River to its headwaters, and of the Columbia from the heads of some of its chief tributaries to the Pacific; and thus the spanners of the continent. They were not, it is true, the first to traverse the wilderness which lay between the Atlantic and the Pacific, but of those who bore the name American they were the first.

In 1803 Louisiana was ceded by France to the United States for the sum of about fifteen millions of dollars; but its boundaries were entirely uncertain, and neither the nation which sold nor that which bought knew what this territory included, how far it extended north or south or west, nor who nor what were its inhabitants. It was certain that there were a few French, Spaniards, and Creoles, besides some Americans, English, and Germans, and the slaves which they possessed. Little was known of the country, save for a short distance beyond the Mississippi River; and it was obviously

important to the new owners of the land to find out at once what the purchase meant to the United States.

One thing seemed certain: the population of the United States, which had already spread far beyond the Allegheny Mountains, was constantly increasing and constantly pushing westward. The encroachments of the whites on the territory occupied by various tribes of the Indians were continual, and the Indians, naturally enough, resented, and sometimes resisted, these encroachments. Here, west of the Mississippi River, was a vast territory, unoccupied save by Indian tribes, many of which were wanderers. The population of this unoccupied territory was so sparse that no doubt it seemed to President Jefferson that here was room for all the Indians east of the Mississippi, and one of his first acts after the cession was concluded, was to attempt to learn what he could with regard to the occupancy of this territory, presumably in the hope that all the Indians east of the Mississippi might be persuaded to move westward beyond the river.

Besides this, Jefferson had already—more than ten years before—endeavored to send out men to cross the continent to the Pacific coast, but the effort had failed. But in January, 1803, before the completion of the purchase of Louisiana, he attempted this once more, recommending to Congress the despatching of a party to trace the Missouri River to its source, and to go thence to the Pacific Ocean.

It is impossible for any man now living to conceive what such an expedition must have meant to the men

who were to command it. Here was a vast and unknown territory of indefinite width, peopled by unknown inhabitants, uncertain as to its food supply, containing unknown dangers and obstacles, which must be crossed on foot—though the journey should be begun by boat. It is true that the rumors long before brought back from the upper Mississippi Valley by Carver suggested waterways across the continent, but these were no more than rumors, and were mingled with an amount of fable which cast doubt on the whole story.

Carver's reflections on the Shining Mountains, already quoted, were the most definite statements that Jefferson or his explorers could have had of that far Western country. It is true that a few Hudson's Bay men had already penetrated as far west as the Rocky Mountains, which Mackenzie had crossed ten years before, yet it may be doubted whether any definite knowledge of this great achievement had as yet reached Washington.

The journey which Lewis and Clark were to make was into a wilderness less known than any that we in our day can conceive of.

The two men prepared to carry out their orders and there is no reason to suppose that they felt any doubt of their own success. Both came of good, old-fashioned fighting and exploring stock and they and all their men were made of the stuff which constituted the old-time Americans. Theirs was the sturdy independence, the unshrinking courage and dogged perseverance in

the face of difficulty which gave to America its Daniel Boone, its David Crockett, and its Zebulon M. Pike; and they set out with eagerness on their journey.

The expedition started late in the year 1803, and proceeded up the river by boat. There were about forty-five men at the start, of whom twenty-five were soldiers, the whole company being enlisted as soldiers a little later. The baggage of the outfit consisted chiefly of ammunition, together with goods to be used as presents for the Indians. The transportation consisted of boats; one a keel boat, fifty-five feet long, drawing three feet of water, fitted for twenty-two oars and a sail; the other two were pirogues, open boats, dug-outs no doubt, one of six, the other of seven oars. There were two horses, which were to be taken along the bank for the purpose of hunting in time of scarcity, or for bringing in game that was killed.

Having wintered at Wood River, in Illinois, the start was made on the 14th of May, 1804. At first their progress was not rapid. Nevertheless, before long they came to the country of the Osages. The story given of the origin of the tribe is worth repeating: "According to universal belief, the founder of the nation was a snail, passing a quiet existence along the banks of the Osage, till a high flood swept him down to the Missouri and left him exposed on the shore. The heat of the sun at length ripened him into a man; but with the change of his nature he had not forgotten his native seats on the Osage, toward which he immediately bent his way. He was, however, soon overtaken by hun-



ger and fatigue, when, happily, the Great Spirit appeared and, giving him a bow and arrow, showed him how to kill and cook deer, and cover himself with the skin. He then proceeded to his original residence; but as he approached the river he was met by a beaver, who inquired, haughtily, who he was and by what authority he came to disturb his possession. The Osage answered that the river was his own, for he had once lived on its borders. As they stood disputing, the daughter of the beaver came, and having by her entreaties reconciled her father to this young stranger, it was proposed that the Osage should marry the young beaver and share with her family the enjoyment of the river. The Osage readily consented, and from this happy union there soon came the village and the nation of the Wasbasha, or Osages, who have ever since preserved a pious reverence for their ancestors, abstaining from the chase of the beaver, because in killing that animal they killed a brother of the Osage."

Struggling on northward, Lewis and Clark passed the Otoes and Missourias, and on June 25 reached the mouth of the Kansas—named from the Indians living on its banks—three hundred and forty miles from the Mississippi. Game was abundant, and there are allusions to deer, elk, and buffalo. At the mouth of the Platte River they sent out messengers to bring in Indians, since a portion of their duty was to endeavor to make peace among the different tribes they met with. Otoes and Pawnees lived not far off, one of the Pawnee villages being then on the Platte, while another was on

the Republican, and a third on the Wolf—now known as the Loup River. Incidental reference is here made to several tribes which wandered and hunted on the heads of the Platte River, and thence to the Rocky Mountains.

One of these, called the Staitan or Kite Indians, is said to have acquired the name of Kite from their flying; that is, from “their being always on horse-back.” These Indians were, of course, the Suhtai—*Suhtai*, tribal name, and *hētān*, man. In other words, when some Indian was asked his name or the name of his tribe, he replied: “I am a man of the Suhtai,” and this the explorers supposed was a tribal name. At that time the tribe was still living as an independent tribe, though about a generation later they joined the Cheyennes and finally became absorbed by them. So complete is this absorption that the Suhtai language, formerly a well-marked dialect of the Cheyenne, differing from it apparently almost as much as the Arrikara dialect differs from the Pawnee, has been almost wholly lost. At the present day only a few of the older Cheyennes can recall any of its words. These Indians were said to be extremely ferocious, and the most warlike of all the Western Indians; they never yielded in battle, nor spared their enemies, and the retaliation for this barbarity had almost extinguished the nation. After these, according to our authors, come the Wetapahato and Kiawa tribes, associated together, and amounting to two hundred men. Wetapahato is the Sioux name for the Kiowas, which the Cheyennes have

abbreviated to Witapat. Other tribes are mentioned, hardly now to be identified.

On July 31 a party of Otoe and Missouri Indians came to their camp, and on the following day a council was held, at which presents, medals, and other ornaments were given to the Indians. The point where this council was held was given the name Council Bluffs, and it stands to-day across the river from Omaha, Nebraska. A little farther up the river they reached an old Omaha village, once consisting of three hundred cabins, but it had been burned about 1799, soon after the small-pox had destroyed four hundred men and a proportion of the women and children. This dread disease gave the Omahas the worst blow that they had ever received, and, perhaps even as much as their wars with the Pawnees, reduced them to a tributary people. On August 16, two parties were sent out to catch fish on a little stream. "They made a drag with small willows and bark, and swept the creek; the first company brought three hundred and eighteen, and the second upward of eight hundred, consisting of pike, bass, fish resembling salmon, trout, redhorse, buffalo, one rockfish, one flatback, perch, catfish, a small species of perch, called on the Ohio silverfish, and a shrimp of the same size, shape, and flavor of those about New Orleans and the lower part of the Mississippi."

A few days before, one of their Frenchmen had deserted, and the commanding officers had sent out men to capture him. This they succeeded in doing, but the man subsequently escaped again. On the 18th they

received another party of Indians—Otoes and Missourias. The next day the first death occurred in the expedition, that of Charles Floyd, who was buried on the top of the hill, and his grave marked by a cedar post.

The post which marked Floyd's grave had been thrown down by the winds before 1839, but was set up again by Joseph Nicollet in that year. All the time, however, the Missouri River was eating into the bank toward the grave, and in the spring of 1857 the high water undermined a part of the bluff and left Floyd's coffin exposed. When this became known at Sioux City, a party visited the grave and rescued the bones, reintering them six hundred feet back from the first grave. This spot was lost again in the course of the years, but was rediscovered in 1895, and finally in 1901 a permanent monument of white stone was erected to the first citizen soldier of the United States to die and be buried within the Louisiana Purchase, and the only man lost on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Farther up the stream, beyond the mouth of the Big Sioux River, they killed their first buffalo. Near the mouth of the Whitestone they found a curious mound, described as a regular parallelogram, the longest side being three hundred yards, and the shorter sixty or seventy. It rises sixty-five or seventy feet above the plain, and shows at the summit a level plain about twelve feet in breadth and ninety in length. This, according to the Sioux, was called the Hill of the

Little People, and "they believe that it is the abode of little devils, in the human form, of about eighteen inches high, and with remarkably large heads; they are armed with sharp arrows, with which they are very skilful, and are always on the watch to kill those who should have the hardihood to approach their residence." Many Indians have been killed by these spirits, and, among "others, three Omaha Indians, only a few years before. The Sioux, Omahas, and Otoes are so afraid of the place that they never visit it."

The wind blows so strongly over the plain in which this mound stands that insects are obliged to seek shelter on its leeward side, or be driven against it. The little birds which feed on these insects resort there in great numbers to pick them up. There the brown martin was so employed, and the birds were so tame that they would not fly until closely approached.

At Calumet Bluff the party was visited by a number of Yankton Sioux, brought in by Sergeant Pryor and his party, who had gone to the village to induce them to come to the river. A council was held with these Indians and presents given them; and in the evening the Indians danced for the entertainment of the white men. To the Durions—Frenchmen who were trading with these Indians—presents were given; and they were requested to try to make peace between the Yanktons and their enemies.

Reference is made to the soldier bands of the Sioux and Cheyennes, though without much comprehension of what this organization is. It is spoken of in these

terms: "It is an association of the most active and brave young men, who are bound to each other by attachment, secured by a vow never to retreat before any danger or give way to their enemies. In war they go forward without sheltering themselves behind trees or aiding their natural valor by any artifice. This punctilious determination not to be turned from their course became heroic or ridiculous a short time since, when the Yanktons were crossing the Missouri on the ice. A hole lay immediately in their course, which might easily have been avoided by going round. This the foremost of the band disdained to do, but went straight forward, and was lost. The others would have followed his example, but were forcibly prevented by the rest of the tribe. The young men sit, and encamp, and dance together, distinct from the rest of the nation; they are generally about thirty or thirty-five years old, and such is the deference paid to courage that their seats in council are superior to those of the chiefs, and their persons more respected. But, as may be supposed, such indiscreet bravery will soon diminish the numbers of those who practice it, so that the band is now reduced to four warriors, who were among our visitors. These were the remains of twenty-two, who composed the society not long ago; but, in a battle with the Kite Indians of the Black Mountains, eighteen of them were killed, and these four were dragged from the field by their companions."

Warrior societies, or, as they are more often termed, soldier bands, existed among all the plains tribes. In



some tribes there might be only four, in others a dozen or fifteen, such societies. They were police officers, and among their important duties was the seeing that orders of the chiefs were obeyed.

The list of the Sioux tribes here given includes the Yanktons, the Tetons of the Burned Woods—now called Brulés; the Tetons Okandandas—now known as Ogallalas; the Teton Minnakenozzo—Minneconjous; the Teton Saone—Santees; Yanktons of the Plains—Yanktonnaies; the Mindawarcarton—Minnewakaton; the Wahpatoota—Wahpatones; the Sista-soone—Sissetons.

Not far beyond Calumet Bluffs were found extraordinary earthworks, said by the explorers and French interpreters to be common on the Platte, the Kansas, and the James rivers. The Poncas were next passed, above La Rivière qui Court—the Niobrara. These are said to have been largely reduced in numbers by the attacks of their enemies, and to be now associating with the Omahas, and residing on the head of the Loup and the Running Water. Above here the first prairie dogs were seen; and not long after they were rejoined by one of their men who, twelve days before, had been sent off after lost horses, and, having found them, had been wandering along the river for twelve days, seeking his party. Mention is made on September 17 of a great prairie dog town, and it is told that their presence here enticed to this place “wolves of a small kind, hawks, and polecats, all of which animals we saw, and presume that they fed on the squirrels.” The whole



country here had recently been burned, and was now covered with young grass, on which herds of antelope and buffalo were feeding.

On the 20th the party had a narrow escape from being buried under a falling bank, undermined by the river. On this day a fort and a large trading house built by Mr. Loizel for the purpose of trading with the Sioux was passed on Cedar Island, and the following day Indians stole one of their horses. They had now come to the country of the Teton Indians, and, holding a council with them, had more or less trouble, which would undoubtedly have resulted in fighting had it not been for the prudence of Captain Clark. The Indians were insolent, and were disposed to go just as far as permitted in annoying the white people. However, they were not allowed to impose on the party, and a short distance above this the main Teton village was passed, and here Captains Lewis and Clark were met at the river bank by ten young men, who carried them on buffalo robes to the large house where the council was to be held—an evidence of the highest respect.

The custom of carrying a person who was to be highly honored on a robe or blanket by young men is very old. It was practised to show honor to aged or brave people, and also if two young people of good family were about to be married, the young girl, as she drew near the home of the bridegroom's parents, riding on a horse led by some old kinswoman, was often met by young men related to the bridegroom, who spread down a robe or blanket, assisted her from her horse,

asked her to sit down on the robe, and then carried her to the lodge of her future husband.

In the shelter where they met were about seventy men, sitting about the chief, before whom were placed a Spanish flag and an American flag which Lewis and Clark had given him. Within the circle was the pipe, supported on two forked sticks, about six or eight inches from the ground, and beneath the pipe was scattered the down of a swan. Food was cooking over the fire, and near the kettle a large amount of buffalo meat, intended as a present. The feast consisted of a dog, pemmican, and pomme blanche, and was ladled into wooden dishes with a horn spoon. After eating and smoking, a number of dances were performed. Concerning these, the very incorrect opinion is expressed: "Nor does the music appear to be anything more than a confusion of noises, distinguished only by hard or gentle blows upon a buffalo skin; the song is perfectly extemporaneous." It is, of course, now well known that these songs and dances are always the same, and never, by any chance, change.

It is noted that these Indians, who appear to have been Ogallalas, had then a fashion of dressing the hair different from anything recently known. The journal says: "The men shaved the hair off their heads, except a small tuft on the top, which they suffered to grow, and wore in plaits over the shoulders. To this they seemed much attached, as the loss of it is the usual sacrifice at the death of near relations." The dress of men and women is described, and it is noted that the

fire-bags of these Sioux were made of the dressed skins of skunks. The women's dresses were not very unlike that of recent times.

The Sioux met along the river by Lewis and Clark were new-comers in that country. It is true that twenty-five years before a few Sioux had crossed the Missouri River and had gone as far west as the Black Hills—which are constantly spoken of by Lewis and Clark as the Black Mountains. But it is also true that up to about the beginning of the nineteenth century few or no Sioux had crossed the Missouri River who remained permanently on the west bank. The accounts of many modern writers on Indian matters seem to imply that from time immemorial the Dakotas had roamed the Western plains, but it is well known by those who have given attention to the subject that this is not at all true; that the Sioux are a people of the East, and the tribal traditions constantly speak of their migration from the country of the rising sun.

After four days spent with these Indians, preparations were made to proceed up the river; but the Indians did not seem willing to let them go. They did not show any particular hostility, but were extremely irritating, and put the white men to so much trouble that they were obliged to threaten them with fighting. Even after they had at last succeeded in starting on their journey, these Sioux followed them along the river, and continued to annoy them.

Not very far above the point where they were troubled by the Sioux they came on a village of Arikaras, with

whom some Frenchmen were living, and among them a Monsieur Gravelines. This man brought together the Arikara chiefs for a conference, in which speeches were made to them similar to those already uttered to the Indians down the river. Some presents were given, but the offer of liquor was declined, the Indians saying that they were surprised that their father should present to them a liquor which would make them fools. From the Indians were received presents of corn, beans, and squashes. The following day other councils were had at other villages of the Rees; and the explorers finally left them to go on their way. The history of this tribe is given with substantial accuracy, and much is said about their habits and their good disposition.

Farther up the river a camp of Sioux was passed, and beyond them a stream called Stone-Idol Creek. This name was given from the discovery that "a few miles back from the Missouri there are two stones resembling human figures, and a third like a dog; all of which are objects of great veneration among the Arikaras."

While nothing is said about the size of these figures, one wonders whether the reference may not be to that stone figure known as the Standing Rock, concerning which the Yankton Sioux have a tradition. We have not heard of the figure of a man in connection with the Standing Rock, but there was certainly the figure of a woman and of a dog, and the woman, who owned the dog, is said to have been a Ree woman. The Yankton tradition, however, is quite different from

that given by Lewis and Clark. Their two stone figures are a lover and a girl whose parents declined to permit the marriage; and these two young persons, the man accompanied by his dog, met on the prairie, and, after wandering about, were at last turned to stone. The Standing Rock, which is now at Standing Rock Agency, in North Dakota, is said to have been a Ree woman, who, after having long been the only wife of her husband, became jealous when he took another wife, and, lagging behind the travelling body of the Rees, was finally turned to stone, and remains to this day a warning to all jealous women.

A little later during the day's journey they saw great numbers of "goats" (antelope) coming to the banks of the river. No doubt these animals were then migrating toward the mountains, or perhaps to the broken hills of the Little Missouri. On October 18 they passed the Cannon-ball River, referred to as Le Boulet; and here they met two Frenchmen who had been robbed by the Mandans, but who turned about and proceeded north again with the white men, in the hope of recovering their possessions. Game was extremely abundant—buffalo, elk, and deer. An Indian who was with them pointed out to them a number of round hills, in which he declared the calumet birds—probably the thunder-bird—had their homes.

## CHAPTER IX

### LEWIS AND CLARK

#### II

AS they proceeded, they passed a number of ruined villages of the Mandans, the low mounds of earth showing where the sod houses had fallen in; but on October 24 they came to a large Mandan village, where they were received with friendship, and where the chief of the Arikaras smoked with the grand chief of the Mandans.

On the 26th, at a large Mandan camp, they met a Mr. McCracken, a trader in the employ of the Northwest Fur Company, who was much on the Missouri River in those early days. The younger Henry frequently mentions him in his journal, but at a slightly later day. The Mandans were not only most friendly, but most interested in the strange people who had arrived in boats; and men, women, and children crowded to the river-bank to see them. "The object which seemed to surprise them most was a corn-mill fixed to the boat, which we had occasion to use, and which delighted them by the ease with which it reduced grain to powder," for the Mandans, like other Indians, pulverized their corn by pounding it in a mortar.



On the following day their boat reached the principal Mandan village, and here was found a Frenchman named Jessaume, who was living among the Mandans with an Indian wife. Not far from the Mandan village was one of the Annahways, a tribe, according to Dr. Matthews, closely related to the Hidatsa, or Minnetari, a part of whose warriors were then absent on an expedition against the Shoshoni. In speeches of the usual form, Captains Lewis and Clark expressed the good will of the Great Father at Washington, and his desire that all the tribes should be at peace; and presents and medals were distributed among the chiefs. In the course of the next few days these presents were returned by gifts of corn and dried meat; and the Arikara chief set out for his home with one Mandan chief and several Minnetari and Mandan warriors. Captain Clark, after much investigation, found a good situation for a winter post, and the work of felling timber and erecting buildings began. Besides the Mandan interpreter, Jessaume, they met here a Canadian Frenchman, who had been with the Cheyenne Indians "on the Black Mountains," and the previous summer had come by way of the Little Missouri to the Great River. The Little Missouri was always a great range for the Cheyennes.

The weather, which for some time had been cold, now grew much colder, and ice formed on the edges of the rivers. Water fowl were passing south, and it was evident that soon the river would close up. A large camp of Assiniboines, with some Crees, had



come to the Mandan village and encamped there. A couple of Frenchmen made their appearance from farther down the river. It seems extraordinary how many Canadian Frenchmen there were at this time in this distant country.

Near Fort Mandan, just established, there were five Indian villages, the residence of three distinct tribes, the Mandans, the Annahways, and the Minnetari. The journal gives the history of these nations as follows: "Within the recollection of living witnesses the Mandans were settled forty years ago in nine villages (the ruins of which we passed about eighty miles below), situated seven on the west and two on the east side of the Missouri. The two finding themselves wasting away before the small-pox and the Sioux, united into one village and moved up the river opposite to the Ricaras. The same causes reduced the remaining seven to five villages, till at length they emigrated in a body to the Ricara nation, where they formed themselves into two villages and joined those of their countrymen who had gone before them. In their new residence they were still insecure, and at length the three villages ascended the Missouri to their present position. The two who had emigrated together settled in the two villages on the northwest side of the Missouri, while the single village took a position on the southeast side. In this situation they were found by those who visited them in 1796, since which the two villages have united into one. They are now in two villages, one on the southeast of the Missouri, the other on the opposite side,

and at the distance of three miles across. The first, in an open plain, contains about forty or fifty lodges, built in the same way as those of the Ricaras; the second, the same number, and both may raise about three hundred and fifty men.

“On the same side of the river, and at the distance of four miles from the lower Mandan village, is another, called Mahaha. It is situated on a high plain at the mouth of the Knife River, and is the residence of the Ahnahaways. This nation, whose name indicates that they were ‘people whose village is on a hill,’ formerly resided on the Missouri, about thirty miles below where they now lived. The Assiniboinés and Sioux forced them to a spot five miles higher, where the greatest part of them were put to death, and the rest emigrated to their present situation, in order to obtain an asylum near the Minnetarees. They are called by the French, Soulier Noir, or Black Shoe Indians; by the Mandans, Wattasoons; and their whole force is about fifty men.”

Toward the end of November seven traders belonging to the Northwest Company reached the Mandans, coming from the Assiniboine River. Before long some of them began to circulate unfavorable reports among the Indians, and Captains Lewis and Clark found it necessary to take immediate steps to stop this. They told Mr. Laroche, the chief of the seven traders, that they should not permit him to give medals and flags to the Indians, who were under the protection of the American nation, and would receive consideration from them alone.

On the last day of November, word was brought that the Sioux had attacked the Mandans, and killed one and wounded two others, and that a number of Indians were missing. Captain Clark, therefore, in order to fix the loyalty of the Indians, summoned his whole force, and arming them, set out for the Mandan village. He told the chief who came out to meet him that he had come to assist them in their war, and would lead them against the Sioux, their enemies, and avenge the blood of their countrymen. This action made a great impression on the Mandans, and a Cheyenne captive, who had been brought up in the tribe, and attained a position of considerable importance, made a speech thanking the white men for their assistance, and expressing the confidence of the Indians in them. There was a long talk, after which Captain Clark left the village. The next day six Sharha (Cheyenne) Indians came to the village, bringing the pipe of peace, and saying that their nation was three days' march behind them. With the Cheyennes were three Pawnees. The Cheyennes were at peace with the Sioux, and the Mandans feared them and wished to put them to death, but knowing that this would be against the wishes of their white friends, they did nothing. Lewis and Clark note the common practice of calling the Arikaras, Pawnees, a practice which still exists.

A little later something is said about the chief of the Mandans, and following this comes the story of the tribe's origin, as given by the Mandans themselves: "Their belief in a future state is connected with this

tradition of their origin: The whole nation resided in one large village under ground, near a subterraneous lake. A grapevine extended its roots down to their habitation and gave them a view of the light. Some of the most adventurous climbed up the vine, and were delighted with the sight of the earth, which they found covered with buffalo, and rich with every kind of fruits. Returning with the grapes they had gathered, their countrymen were so pleased with the taste of them that the whole nation resolved to leave their dull residence for the charms of the upper region. Men, women, and children ascended by means of the vine; but when about half the nation had reached the surface of the earth a corpulent woman, who was clambering up the vine, broke it with her weight and closed upon herself and the rest of the nation the light of the sun. Those who were left on the earth made a village below, where we saw the nine villages; and when the Mandans die they expect to return to the original seats of their forefathers, the good reaching the ancient village by means of the lake, which the burden of the sins of the wicked will not enable them to cross."

Although the weather was cold, buffalo were near, and there was much hunting by means of the surround, with the bow and arrows. Captain Clark hunted with the Indians, and killed ten buffalo, of which five only were brought into the fort, the remainder being taken by the Indians; since, as the buffalo were killed by guns, they bore no mark of identification, such as an arrow would have furnished. The next day Captain Lewis took

fifteen men and went out to hunt buffalo. They killed eight and one deer; but, being obliged to travel on foot through deep snow, it took them a long time to approach the buffalo, and some of the men were frost-bitten.

It was now mid-December, and very cold; and the white men suffered a good deal and hunted but little. About this time a Mr. Haney arrived from the British post on the Assiniboine, bearing a letter from Mr. Chabouillez, a well-known trader of the North, with offers of service. In the Mandan village the Indians were playing at sticks, apparently in the method practiced at the present day among the Blackfeet. Thin circular stones are rolled along the ground, and followed by running men, who slide their sticks along the ground trying to have the disk fall on them. On December 22 the explorers seem to have first seen the horns of the Rocky Mountain sheep. It is "about the size of a small elk or large deer, the horns winding like those of a ram, which they resemble also in texture, though larger and thicker."

The year 1804 opened with New Year's day festivities, and "in the morning we permitted sixteen men with their music to go up to the first village, where they delighted the whole tribe with their dances, particularly with the movements of one of the Frenchmen, who danced on his head." Frequent mention is made of the pleasure with which the Indians witnessed the dancing of the Americans, and this amusement was much indulged in by the men, many of whom, as already said, were Frenchmen.

Although the cold was intense and the white men suffered severely, the Indians seemed to regard it very little. They were coming and going constantly, very slightly clad, and sometimes were obliged to sleep out in the snow, with no protection save a buffalo robe; and yet they were seldom frozen.

During these months of inaction, Lewis and Clark were frequently occupied in settling individual quarrels among the various Indians near them, making peace between husbands and wives and persuading the Indians to abandon war journeys planned for the following spring.

Traders from the North were frequent visitors to these villages. All through the winter the blacksmith kept at work with his forge, manufacturing various articles of iron, and the Indians seemed never to weary of watching him and admiring the magic by which he turned a straight piece of iron into a useful implement.

During all this time hunting was going on, for though the explorers had abundant provisions, yet they were supporting themselves as far as possible from the country. Besides the corn which they purchased from the Indians, in exchange for trade goods and bits of iron, they killed buffalo, deer, and elk; and on one hunt, in February, Captain Clark and his party killed forty deer, three buffalo, and sixteen elk. Most of the game was too lean for use, and was left for the wolves. A part, however, was brought to a point on the river, and there protected in pens built



of logs, which should keep off the wolves, ravens, and magpies. The next day four men were sent with sleds and three horses, to bring in the meat. They returned that night stating that a party of one hundred men had rushed upon them, cut the traces of the sleds and carried off two of the horses, the third being left them through the influence of one of the Indians. The Indians had also taken some of the men's arms. An effort was made to pursue these enemies, who were believed to be Sioux, and Captain Lewis, with a few Mandans, set out on their trail. This was followed for two or three days, until at last it turned off into the prairie. The supposition that these robbers were Sioux was confirmed by finding some moccasins that had been thrown away, though the Sioux had dropped some corn in one place, apparently with the hope of making it appear that they were Arikaras. Before returning, Captain Clark visited the place where the meat had been cached, and did some more hunting; and, having killed thirty-six deer, fourteen elk, and one wolf, he returned to the fort with about three thousand pounds of meat.

The weather was now growing milder, and preparations began to be made for continuing the journey. Men were sent out to look for trees suitable for canoes. White men began to arrive from the Northwest Company's post, and also Mr. Gravelines, with Frenchmen from the Arikara village down the river. These brought word that the Rees were willing to make peace with the Mandans and Minnetari, and asked



if the Mandans would be willing to have the Arikaras settle near them, and form with them a league against the Sioux. Word was brought that the Sioux who had stolen the explorers' horses had afterward gone to the Arikara village and told what they had done, and that the Rees were so angry at this that they had declined to give them anything to eat; in other words, had treated them as enemies.

The river broke up late in March, and, as happened every spring, many buffalo were brought down on the floating ice. An interesting description is given of how the Indians killed the buffalo floating down on the cakes of ice, which they dared not leave. The men ran lightly over the loose ice in the river until they had reached the large cake on which the buffalo stood, and, killing it there, then paddled the cake of ice to the shore.

A thunder-storm, accompanied by hail, came on April 1—the breaking up of the winter. And now for several days the explorers were engaged in packing specimens to be sent back to Washington; skins and skeletons of some of the animals of the country, together with a number of articles of Indian dress, arms, implements, tobacco seed, and corn, with specimens of some plants. Arrangements were made also for some of the chiefs of the Rees to visit the President; and a delegation from the Rees made a peace with the Mandans.

The explorers were now ready to continue their journey, and left the fort the afternoon of April 7.

The party consisted of thirty-two persons, including the interpreters, one of whom was accompanied by his wife. At the same time their large boat, manned by seven soldiers and two Frenchmen, set out down the river for the distant United States.

The journey up the river was slow, and it would be too long to tell of all they saw—things then new to all, but now common enough. The prairie and the river bottom swarmed with game—herds of buffalo, elk, antelope, with some deer and wolves. As they went along they saw a nest of geese built “in the tops of lofty cottonwood trees,” an interesting fact in natural history, rediscovered more than fifty years later by an enterprising ornithologist. From time to time, as they passed up the river, they passed small abandoned encampments of Indians, at one of which, “from the hoops of small kegs found in them, we judged could belong to Assiniboines only, as they are the only Missouri Indians who use spirituous liquors. Of these they are so passionately fond that it forms their chief inducement to visit the British on the Assiniboine, to whom they barter for kegs of rum their dried and pounded meat, their grease, and the skins of large and small wolves, and small foxes; the dangerous exchange is transported to their camps, with their friends and relations, and soon exhausted in brutal intoxication. So far from considering drunkenness as disgraceful, the women and children are permitted and invited to share in these excesses with their husbands and fathers, who boast how often

their skill and industry as hunters have supplied them with the means of intoxication; in this, as in other habits and customs, they resemble the Sioux, from whom they are descended."

The recent presence of the Assiniboinés on the river had made the game scarce and shy, and it was so early in the season that the animals killed were very thin in flesh, and almost useless for food. Beaver, however, were numerous, and seemed larger and fatter, and with darker and better fur, than any seen hitherto. They were now in the country of abundant buffalo, and the calves had already begun to make their appearance. On April 26 they reached the mouth of the Yellowstone River, "known to the French as La Roche Jaune." Game was so plenty that it was scarcely necessary to hunt, and they killed only what was needed for food. The river banks were lined with dead buffalo; some partly devoured by wolves. The buffalo had evidently been drowned in crossing, either by breaking through the ice or being unable to clamber from the water when landing under some high bluff.

On April 29 Captain Lewis met his first grizzly bear, which the explorers call white bears. "Of the strength and ferocity of this animal the Indians had given us dreadful accounts; they never attack him but in parties of six or eight persons, and even then are often defeated, with the loss of one or more of the party. Having no weapons but bows and arrows, and the bad guns with which the traders supply them, they are

obliged to approach very near to the bear; and as no wound except through the head or heart is mortal, they frequently fall a sacrifice if they miss their aim. He rather attacks than avoids man; and such is the terror he has inspired that the Indians who go in quest of him paint themselves and perform all the superstitious rites customary when they make war on a neighboring nation. Hitherto those we had seen did not appear desirous of encountering us, but although to a skilful rifleman the danger is very much diminished, the white bear is still a terrible animal. On approaching these two, both Captain Lewis and the hunter fired, and each wounded a bear. One of them made his escape; the other turned upon Captain Lewis and pursued him for seventy or eighty yards; but, being badly wounded, he could not run so fast as to prevent him from reloading his piece, which he again aimed at him, and a third shot from the hunter brought him to the ground."

The curiosity of the antelope is spoken of as being often the occasion of its easy destruction. "When they first see the hunters they run with great velocity; if he lies down on the ground and lifts up his arm, his hat or his foot, they return with a light trot to look at the object, and sometimes go and return two or three times, till they approach within reach of the rifle. So, too, they sometimes leave their flock to go and look at the wolves, which crouch down, and, if the antelope is frightened at first, repeat the same manœuver, and sometimes relieve each other till they decoy it from the

party, when they seize it. But generally the wolves take them as they are crossing the rivers; for, although swift on foot, they are not good swimmers."

As the party struggled on up the Missouri they passed the mouth of the Porcupine River, so-called from the unusual number of porcupines seen near it. They continued to see vast quantities of buffalo, elk, and deer—principally of the long-tailed kind—with antelope, beaver, geese, ducks, and swans. As they went on, the game became much tamer. The male buffalo would scarcely give way to them, and as the white men drew near, looked at them for a moment and then quietly began to graze again.

On May 4 they passed some old Indian hunting camps, "one of which consisted of two large lodges fortified with a circular fence twenty or thirty feet in diameter, and made of timber laid horizontally, the beams overlaying each other to the height of five feet, and covered with the trunks and limbs of trees that have drifted down the river. The lodges themselves are formed by three or more strong sticks, about the size of a man's leg or arm, and twelve feet long, which are attached at the top by a withe of small willows, and spread out so as to form at the base a circle of from ten to fourteen feet in diameter; against these are placed pieces of drift-wood and fallen timber, usually in three ranges, one on the other, and the interstices are covered with leaves, bark, and straw, so as to form a conical figure about ten feet high, with a small aperture in one side for the door." These lodges, of course,

were war lodges of the Assiniboinés, Gros Ventres, or Blackfeet, though the travellers evidently took them for ordinary habitations.

The explorers were greatly interested in the animals they saw—especially the bears—and gave good descriptions of them, and of their habits.

The tenacity of life in the bears made them especially interesting, and their encounters with them were often marked by danger. However, the people usually hunted in couples or in small parties, and as yet no one had been hurt.

## CHAPTER X

### LEWIS AND CLARK

#### III

THEY had now passed Milk River, and the Dry Fork, and the journal says: "The game is now in great quantities, particularly the elk and buffalo, which last are so gentle that the men are obliged to drive them out of the way with sticks and stones." Bears were abundant, and almost every day one was killed.

They were approaching the mountains, and the spring storms, which here last until the middle of July, troubled them with abundant rains and by obscuring the view. On the 20th they reached the mouth of the Musselshell, and pushing on, in a short time found themselves among the bad lands of the upper Missouri. They were now obliged to "cordell," a number of the men walking on the shore with a tow-line, while others kept the boat off the bank. This was slow and difficult work, and was made more dangerous by the fact that their elk-skin ropes were getting old and rotten, and were likely to break at critical times. On May 29 some buffalo ran through the camp, and caused much



confusion and alarm, no one knowing exactly what had happened until after it was all over. When they passed the mouth of the Judith River they found traces of a large camp of Indians, a hundred and twenty-six fires, made, as they conjectured, by "The Minnetari of Fort de Prairie," that is, the Gros Ventres of the Prairie—Arapahoes or Atséna. Here, too, they passed precipices about one hundred and twenty feet high, below which lay scattered the remains of at least a hundred carcasses of buffalo. The method by which the buffalo are driven over the cliffs by the upper Missouri tribes is described. At this place the wolves which had been feasting on these carcasses were very fat, and so gentle that one of them was killed with a spontoon or halberd. They were now among some of the most impressive bad lands of the Missouri River, and the extraordinary effects of erosion by air and water made the explorers wonder.

Captains Lewis and Clark were much puzzled at this point to know which of the rivers before them was the main Missouri. The Minnetari had told them that the main Missouri headed close to the Columbia River, and it was this main stream that they wished to follow up, in order that they might strike Columbia waters, and thus continue their way toward the west. The choice of the wrong branch might take them a very long distance out of their way, and they would be forced to return to this point, losing a season for traveling, and also, perhaps, so disheartening the men as to take away much or all of their enthusiasm. Accord-

ingly, two land parties set out, one under Captain Lewis and one under Captain Clark. Captain Lewis followed up the Missouri River, and became convinced that it was not the main stream, and that it would not be wise to follow it up. The remainder of his party, however, believed it to be the true Missouri. Captain Clark, who had followed up the other stream, had seen nothing to give him much notion as to whether it was or was not the principal river. After long consideration, and getting from the interpreters and Frenchmen all that they knew on the subject, they determined to make a cache at this point, and that a party should ascend the southern branch by land until they should reach either the falls of the Missouri or the mountains. This plan was carried out. The heavy baggage, together with some provisions, salt, powder, and tools, were cached; one of the boats was hidden; and Captain Lewis, with four men, started June 11 to follow up the southern stream.

On the 13th they came to a beautiful plain, where the buffalo were in greater numbers than they had ever been seen, and a little later Captain Lewis came upon the great falls of the Missouri. This most cheering discovery gave them the information that they desired, and the next day an effort was made to find a place where the canoes might be portaged beyond the falls. This was not found; and a considerable journey up and down the river showed to the explorers the great number of falls existing at this place. Game was very numerous, and buffalo were killed and the meat pre-

pared, and a messenger was sent back to the main party to tell what had been discovered. One day in this neighborhood Captain Lewis, having carelessly left his rifle unloaded, was chased for a considerable distance by a bear, and finally took refuge in the river. The next day he was threatened by three buffalo bulls, which came up to within a hundred yards of him on the full charge, and then stopped; and the next day, in the morning, he found a rattlesnake coiled up on a tree trunk close to where he had been sleeping. There seems to have been excitement enough in the neighborhood of the Great Falls. It was found necessary here to leave their boats behind, and the travellers made an effort to supply their place by a homely cart, the wheels of which were made from sections of the trunk of a large cottonwood tree.

For a good while now the party had been travelling, most of the time on foot, over rough country, covered with prickly pears, and the ground rough with hard points of earth, where the buffalo had trodden during the recent rains. Their foot-gear was worn out, and the feet of many of the men were sore. All were becoming weak from exertion and the fatigues they were constantly undergoing. However, the enormous abundance of game kept them from suffering from hunger. Two or three weeks were spent in the neighborhood of the Great Falls, preparing for their onward journey. Provisions were secured by killing buffalo and drying their meat. They tried to prepare a skin boat for going up the river, and for various explorations and measure-

ments in the neighborhood, but the attempt was unsuccessful. The iron frame had been brought from the East, but wood for flooring and gunwales was hardly to be had. They were obliged to give up the boat, strip the covering from it, and cache the pieces.

While they were in this neighborhood, they were much annoyed by the white bears, which constantly visited their camp during the night. Their dog kept them advised of the approach of the animals, but it was annoying to be obliged to sleep with their arms by their sides and to expect to be awakened at any moment. The daring of the bears was great; once some of the hunters, seeing a place where they thought it likely that a bear might be found, climbed into a tree, shouted, and a bear instantly rushed toward them. It came to the tree and stopped and looked at them, when one of the men shot it. It proved to be the largest bear yet seen.

Captain Clark, journeying with Chaboneau, the interpreter, his wife and child, and the negro servant York, took shelter one day under a steep rock in a deep ravine, to be out of the rain and wind. A heavy shower came up, and before they knew it a tremendous torrent came rolling down the ravine, so that they narrowly escaped losing their lives. Captain Clark pulled the Indian woman up out of the water, which, before he could climb the bank, was up to his waist. The guns and some instruments were lost in the flood.

The question of transportation was finally solved by their making two small canoes from cotton-wood trees, and they pushed on up the Missouri. A small party

went ahead on foot, examining the country. Game was fairly numerous, and near the Dearborn River they saw a "large herd of the big horned animals." Indian camps were occasionally seen, and it was noted that in some places pine trees had been stripped of their bark, which, the Indian woman told them, was done by the Snakes in the spring, in order to obtain the soft parts of the wood and the bark for food.

The river here was deep, and with only a moderate current, and they were obliged to employ the tow-rope, cordelling their vessel along the shore. Geese and cranes were breeding along the river; the young geese perfectly feathered and as large as the old ones, while the cranes were as large as turkeys. The land party followed for much of the distance an Indian trail, which led in the general direction they wished to go.

They had now reached the Three Forks of the Missouri, which were duly named, as we know them to-day, Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin. They were in the country of the Snake Indians, whom they were in daily hope of meeting, feeling sure that through the medium of Chaboneau's wife they would be able to establish satisfactory relations with them. Captain Clark still kept ahead of the party, on foot, to learn the courses and practicability of the different streams for the canoes, and left notes at different points, with instructions for the boats. One of these notes, left on a green pole stuck up in the mud, failed to be received because a beaver cut down the pole after it had been planted, and the consequence was that the canoes proceeded for a

considerable distance up the wrong fork, and were obliged to return. Reaching the Beaverhead, the Snake woman pointed out the place where she had been captured five years before. On August 9 Captain Lewis, with three men, set out, determined to find some Indians before returning to the party, and the rest of the expedition kept on up the main fork of the Jefferson as best they could. On August 11 Captain Lewis had the pleasure of seeing a man on horseback approaching him. The man's appearance was different from that of any Indian seen before, and Captain Lewis was convinced that he was a Shoshoni. When the two men were about a mile apart the Indian stopped, and Captain Lewis signalled to him with his blanket, making the sign of friendship, and attempted to approach him. The Indian was suspicious, and unfortunately the two men who were following Captain Lewis did not observe the latter's sign to wait, and so, though the Indian permitted the white man to come to within a hundred yards of him, he finally turned his horse and rode off into the willows. They followed the track of the Indian as well as they could until night, and the next morning continued the search. By this time their food was nearly gone. They kept on up the stream until it had grown to be a rivulet so small that Captain Lewis could stand over it with one foot on either bank.

Keeping on to the west, they reached the divide between the Atlantic and Pacific waters, and the next day came upon a woman and a man, who declined to await near approach. A little bit later they came on three



Indians, an old and a young woman and a little girl. The young woman escaped by running, but the other two sat down on the ground and seemed to be awaiting death. Captain Lewis made them presents, and after a little conversation, by signs, they set out for the camp. Before they had gone far they met a troop of sixty warriors rushing down upon them at full speed. Captain Lewis put down his gun and went forward with a flag. The leading Indians spoke to the women, who explained that the party were white men, and showed, with pride, the presents that they had received. The warriors received them with great friendliness, and they smoked together on the best of terms, and subsequently proceeded to the camp, where they were received with the utmost hospitality. The Indians had abundant fresh meat and salmon. Most of them were armed with bows, but a few had guns, which they had obtained from the Northwest Company. They had many horses, and hunted antelope on horseback, surrounding and driving them from point to point, until the antelope were worn out and the horses were foaming with sweat. Many of the antelope broke through and got away.

Captain Lewis tried to arrange with the chief to return with him to the Jefferson, meet the party, and bring them over the mountains, and then trade for some horses. The chief readily consented, but it subsequently appeared that he was more or less suspicious, and he repeated to Captain Lewis the suggestions made by some of the Indians that the white men were perhaps allies of their enemies and were trying to draw



them into an ambushade. The chief, with six or eight warriors, started back with Captain Lewis, and it was evident that the people in the village thought that they were going into great danger, for the women were crying and praying for good fortune for those about to go into danger, while the men who feared to go were sullen and unhappy. Nevertheless, before the party had gone far from the camp, they were joined by others, and a little later all the men, and many of the women, overtook them, and travelled along cheerfully with them. Two or three days later Captain Lewis sent out two of his men to hunt, and this seemed to revive the suspicions of the Indians; and when, a little later, one of the Indians who had followed the hunters was seen riding back as hard as he could, the whole company of Indians who were with Captain Lewis whirled about and ran away as fast as possible. It was not until they had raced along for a mile or two that the Indian who returned made the others understand that one of the white men had killed a deer, and instantly the whole company turned about and ran back, each man eager to get first to the deer that he might make sure of a piece.

Meantime the main party had struggled on up the river, and on August 17 were met by a messenger from Captain Lewis, Drewyer, together with two or three of his Indian friends. The two parties met, and, through the medium of Chaboneau's wife, all suspicions were allayed and the friendliest relations established. Efforts were now made to learn something about the

country to the westward and the best method of passing through it. The Indians said the way was difficult, the river swift, full of rapids, and flowing through deep canyons, which passed through mountains impassable for men or horses. The route to the southward of the river was said to pass through a dry, parched desert of sand, uninhabited by game, and impossible at that season for the horses, as the grass was dead and the water dried up by the heat of summer. The route to the northward, though bad, appeared to present the best road.

Obviously, if it was practicable, the river presented the easiest passage through the country, and, in the hope that its difficulties had been exaggerated, Captain Clark set out to inspect its channel. Passing as far down the river as he could, the leader convinced himself that it was useless to attempt its passage. Game was scarce, and for food the party depended almost entirely on the salmon which they could purchase from the Indians, and which in some cases were freely given them. The Shoshoni Indians led a miserable life, depending chiefly on salmon and roots. They ventured out on the buffalo plain to kill and dry the meat, though continually in fear of the Pahkees, "or the roving Indians of the Saskatchewan," who sometimes followed them even into the mountains. These Pahkees were undoubtedly the Piegan tribe of Blackfeet, known for many years as bitter enemies of the Snakes.

## CHAPTER XI

### LEWIS AND CLARK

#### IV

**B**Y the end of August the explorers, having procured a number of horses, set to work to make saddles, cache their extra baggage, and set out for their journey north and west. The way led them over rough mountains, often without a trail. They were fortunate in having an old Indian as guide, but met much cold weather, and found the country barren of game. However, after two or three days of very difficult travel, they came upon a camp of friendly Indians, who fed them. These people professed to be an offshoot of the Tushepaw tribe, had plenty of horses, and were fairly well provided. They told them that down the great river was a large fall, near which lived white people, who supplied them with beads and brass wire. Not long after this they met the first Chopunnish, or Pierced-nose Indians, whom we know to-day as Nez Percés. They were friendly, and were treated as other tribes had been.

Although the explorers had had one satisfying meal, yet food was very scarce, and the Indians subsisted as

best they might on the few salmon still remaining in the streams, which they shared with the white men. The privations suffered recently were making them weak; many were sick; and it was so necessary to husband their strength that Captain Clark determined to make the remaining journey by water. Canoes were built, and the thirty-eight horses were branded and turned over to three Indians to care for until the explorers returned. Provisions for the trip were difficult to obtain. On the morning of October 7 they started down Lewis River without two of the Nez Percé chiefs who had promised to go with them. Indian encampments were numerous along the river, but food continued very scarce, and their only supply consisted of roots, which they got from the Indians. Later they bought some dogs from the Nez Percés for food, and were laughed at by the Indians, who did not eat dogs. The Nez Percés during summer and autumn occupied themselves in fishing for salmon and collecting roots and berries, while in winter they hunted the deer on snow-shoes, and toward spring crossed the mountains to the Missouri for the purpose of trading for buffalo robes. They appeared very different from the kindly Shoshoni; they were selfish and avaricious, and expected a reward for every service and a full price for every article they parted with.

Although it was now drawing toward mid-October, the weather continued warm. Progress down the stream was rapid, though more so in appearance than in reality, owing to the river's bends. On the bank of

the stream, at a large Indian camp where they stopped October 11, a novel form of sweat-house was observed. Earth was banked up on three sides against a cut-bank at the river's edge, and the Indians, descending through the roof, which was covered with brush and earth, except for a small aperture, took down their hot stones and vessels of water and bathed here.

They were now approaching the camp of a different nation of Indians, who had been warned of the coming of the party by the two chiefs who had gone before, and they began to receive visits from men who had come up the stream to satisfy the curiosity excited by the reports. When they reached the camp they were hospitably received, and the usual council was held, accompanied by distribution of presents and medals. Here they obtained from the Indians some dogs, a few fish, and a little dried horse-flesh. This was at the junction of the Lewis River and the Columbia; and the Indians, who called themselves Sokulks, seemed a mild and peaceable people, living in a state of comparative happiness. The men appeared to have but one wife, old age was respected, and the people were agreeable to deal with. Their support was largely fish, to which were added roots and the flesh of the antelope. They were chiefly canoe people, and possessed but few horses.

Here Captain Clark, while ascending the Columbia in a small canoe, first saw, besides the captured fish drying on scaffolds, "immense numbers of salmon strewn along the shore, or floating on the surface of the water." At the Indian villages that he passed he

was hospitably received, and here first the sage grouse, called a "prairie cock, a bird of the pheasant kind, of about the size of a small turkey," was captured.

Proceeding down the Columbia a few days' journey, an interesting incident took place. "As Captain Clark arrived at the lower end of the rapid before any, except one of the small canoes, he sat down on a rock to wait for them, and, seeing a crane fly across the river, shot it, and it fell near him. Several Indians had been before this passing on the opposite side toward the rapids, and some who were then nearly in front of him, being either alarmed at his appearance or the report of the gun, fled to their homes. Captain Clark was afraid that these people had not yet heard that the white men were coming, and therefore, in order to allay their uneasiness before the rest of the party should arrive, he got into the small canoe with three men, rowed over toward the houses, and, while crossing, shot a duck, which fell into the water. As he approached no person was to be seen, except three men in the plains, and they, too, fled as he came near the shore. He landed in front of five houses close to each other, but no one appeared, and the doors, which were of mat, were closed. He went toward one of them with a pipe in his hand, and, pushing aside the mat, entered the lodge, where he found thirty-two persons, chiefly men and women, with a few children, all in the greatest consternation; some hanging down their heads, others crying and wringing their hands. He went up to them and shook hands with each one in the most friendly manner; but their apprehensions, which



had for a moment subsided, revived on his taking out a burning-glass, as there was no roof to the house, and lighting his pipe. He then offered it to several of the men, and distributed among the women and children some small trinkets which he had with him, and gradually restored a degree of tranquility among them. Leaving this house, and directing each of his men to visit a house, he entered a second. Here he found the inmates more terrified than those in the first; but he succeeded in pacifying them, and afterward went into the other houses, where the men had been equally successful. Retiring from the houses, he seated himself on a rock, and beckoned to some of the men to come and smoke with him, but none of them ventured to join him till the canoes arrived with the two chiefs, who immediately explained our pacific intentions toward them. Soon after the interpreter's wife landed, and her presence dissipated all doubts of our being well disposed, since in this country no woman ever accompanies a war party; they therefore all came out, and seemed perfectly reconciled; nor could we, indeed, blame them for their terrors, which were perfectly natural. They told the two chiefs that they knew we were not men, for they had seen us fall from the clouds. In fact, unperceived by them, Captain Clark had shot the white crane, which they had seen fall just before he appeared to their eyes; the duck which he had killed also fell close by him, and as there were some clouds flying over at the moment, they connected the fall of the birds with his sudden appearance, and believed that he had him-



self actually dropped from the clouds, considering the noise of the rifle, which they had never heard before, the sound announcing so extraordinary an event. This belief was strengthened, when, on entering the room, he brought down fire from the heavens by means of his burning-glass. We soon convinced them, however, that we were merely mortals, and after one of our chiefs had explained our history and objects, we all smoked together in great harmony."

Below this, other Indian villages were passed, and there was more or less intercourse between the white men and the Indians. On the 20th an island was visited, one end of which was devoted to the burial of the dead. The passage down the river continued to be more or less interrupted by rapids and falls, about which they were obliged to make portages. All the Indians seemed to be friendly, and seemed also to be in great dread of the Snake Indians, with whom they were constantly at war.

Here is described the method of certain tribes of preparing fish, by drying, and pounding it fine, and then placing it in a basket lined with skin of the salmon, and covering the top of the basket with skins. Fish prepared in this way would keep sound and sweet for years. It was an article of trade between these people and those farther down the river, who eagerly purchased it. The preparation seems to have been the equivalent of the pemmican, made of flesh, and so extensively used on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains.

The rapids which they constantly encountered greatly delayed them, and sometimes the contents of one or more boats were soaked by being upset or by shipping water. Food was scarce, and they continued to purchase dogs for provisions. October 24 a change was noticed in the actions of the Indians, who seemed more suspicious than usual and approached the travellers with more caution. This alarmed the two Indian chiefs who had come with them down the river, and they wished to leave the party and return to their own country. However, they were persuaded to remain two nights longer, since they had proved most useful in quieting the fears of the different tribes met with and inspiring them with confidence in the white people.

A little later they met Indians, some of whom wore white men's clothing, said to have been obtained from people farther down the stream, and who had also a musket, a cutlass, and several brass kettles. A chief who had some white men's clothing exhibited to the travellers, as trophies, fourteen dried forefingers, which he told them had belonged to enemies whom he had killed in fighting, to the south-east. At a burial-place were deposited brass kettles and frying-pans with holes in the bottoms. The making holes in these vessels, which were to contain liquid, was, of course, for the purpose of "killing" the vessel, that it might be useful to the spirit who was to use it in another life. Not very far below this they first met the wappato, a word now firmly established in the vernacular of the North-

west; it is the root of the plant *Sagittaria*, well known as an excellent food for human beings, and eagerly eaten by wild-fowl. The Indians with whom the explorers now came in contact were troublesome mortals, very presuming, and disposed to take anything that was left about. They possessed still more articles of white men's manufacture, some having muskets and pistols. Below the mouth of the Coweliske River they found an Indian who spoke a few words of English, and he gave them the name of the principal person who traded with them—a Mr. Haley.

The river was now growing wider; there were great numbers of water-fowl; and on the afternoon of November 7 the fog suddenly cleared away and they saw the ocean, the object of all their labors, the reward of all their anxiety. The weather was almost constantly rainy, and they were continually wet. There were numerous villages along the river, and these were to be avoided, because, like all Indian villages recently passed, they were terribly infested by fleas. Among the wild fowl killed in this locality were a goose and two canvas-back ducks. The sea was heavy in this mouth of the river, and the motion so great that several of the men became sea-sick. They landed in the bay, but the hills came down so steeply to the water's edge that there was no room for them to make a satisfactory camp nor to secure the baggage above high water. However, they raised the baggage on poles and spent a most uncomfortable night. For some days now they camped on the beach, wet, cold, and comfortless, with nothing but

dried fish to satisfy their hunger. Hunters sent out failed to bring in any game, but they bought a few fresh fish from the Indians. On the 15th of November, however, the sun came out, and they were able to dry their merchandise; and, the wind falling, they loaded their canoes, and after proceeding a short distance found a sand beach, where they made a comfortable camp. This was in full view of the ocean, quite on the route traversed by the Indians, many of whom visited them; and there was more or less game in the neighborhood, for the hunters brought in two deer, some geese and ducks, and a crane.

It was now almost winter, and the travellers began to look out for a place where they might build their winter camp. The Indians reported deer and elk reasonably abundant on the opposite side of the bay; but, on the other hand, the explorers wished to be near the ocean, that they might provide themselves with salt, and also for the chance of meeting some of the trading vessels, which were expected in the course of the next two or three months. The rain continued and the hunters were unsuccessful. A diet of dried fish was making the men ill, and the prospects were not bright. However, on the 2d of December, one of the hunters killed an elk, the first taken on the west side of the Rocky Mountains; and we may imagine how much its flesh was enjoyed after the long diet of roots and fish. And now for some time deer and elk were killed in great abundance; but the continued wet weather caused much of the flesh to spoil. The Indians seemed to be

taking a good many salmon—presumably in the salt water of the bay—and they had many berries.

Christmas and New Year's passed, and in the first days of January there came the news that a whale had been cast up on the beach. All the Indians hurried to it; and following them went Captain Clark and some of the men, and with them Chaboneau and his wife, the latter extremely anxious to venture to the edge of the salt water and to see the enormous "fish" which had come ashore. The skeleton of the whale measured one hundred and five feet in length.

"While smoking with the Indians, Captain Clark was startled about ten o'clock by a loud, shrill cry from the opposite village, on hearing which all the natives immediately started up to cross the creek, and the guide informed him that some one had been killed. On examination, one of our men was discovered to be absent, and a guard was despatched, who met him crossing the creek in great haste. An Indian belonging to another band, and who happened to be with the Killamucks that evening, had treated him with much kindness, and walked arm in arm with him to a tent, where our man found a Chinook squaw who was an old acquaintance. From the conversation and manner of the stranger, this woman discovered that his object was to murder the white man for the sake of the few articles on his person; and when he rose and pressed our man to go to another tent, where they would find something better to eat, she held McNeal by the blanket. Not knowing her object, he freed himself from her, and was going on with

his pretended friend, when she ran out and gave a shriek which brought the men of the village over, and the stranger ran off before McNeal knew what had occasioned the alarm."

With a small load of blubber and oil, the party returned to the fort, where they found that game was still being killed, and endeavored to jerk some of it. Much is said in the journal about the various Indian tribes of the neighborhood, their method of hunting and fishing, their habitations, and their dress and implements. The canoes, and the skill in managing them, excited the unfeigned admiration of the white men; and the fact that such canoes could be constructed by people without axes, and armed only with a chisel, made of an old file, about an inch or an inch and a half in width, seemed to them very extraordinary. It was noted that some of the Indians, especially the women, appeared to tattoo the legs and arms; and on the arm of one woman was read the name J. Bowman; perhaps some trader who had visited the locality. Among these people women were very well treated, and old age was highly respected.

## CHAPTER XII

### LEWIS AND CLARK

#### V

THE winter was spent chiefly in procuring food and in observing the natives and the geography of the neighboring country, and the expedition had not expected to leave their permanent camp, Fort Clatsop, before the first of April. By the first of March, however, the elk, on which they chiefly depended for food, had moved away to ascend the mountains, and their trade goods being almost exhausted, they were too poor to purchase food from the Indians. It was evident that they must start back up the river, in the hope of there finding food, and must reach the point where they had left their horses before the Indians there should have moved off across the mountains or dispersed over the country.

During the winter they had worked hard at dressing skins, so that they were now well clad, and had besides three or four hundred pairs of moccasins. They still had also one hundred and forty pounds of powder and about twice that weight of lead, quite enough to carry them back.



On the 23d of March, therefore, after giving certificates to some of the Indian chiefs, and leaving tacked up on one of their cabins a notice of their successful crossing of the continent and their start back, they set out in two canoes up the Columbia. As they passed along they at first found little difficulty in securing provisions from the acquaintances they had made while descending the river; and besides this, the hunters killed some game. Before long, however, they began to meet Indians coming down the river who informed them that they had been driven from the Great Rapids by lack of provisions, their winter store of dried fish having become exhausted, and the salmon not being expected for a month or more. This was dismal news to people who were ascending the river in the hope of obtaining provisions, but there was nothing for them to do except to keep on, living on the country as well as they could, trying to reach the place where they had left their horses before the Indians should have departed. Their hunters succeeded in killing some deer and elk on the south side of the river, though there seemed no game on the north. Besides that, the deer killed were so extremely thin in flesh that it hardly seemed worth while to bring them into camp.

Many of the Indians still stood in great fear of the "medicine" of the white men; and Captain Clark, returning from a short exploring trip, saw an example of this. "On entering one of the apartments of the house, Captain Clark offered several articles to the Indians in exchange for wappatoo; but they appeared sullen and

ill-humored, and refused to give him any. He therefore sat down by the fire opposite to the men, and, drawing a portfire match from his pocket, threw a small piece of it into the flames; at the same time he took out his pocket compass, and by means of a magnet which happened to be in his inkhorn, made the needle turn round very briskly. The match immediately took fire, and burned violently, on which the Indians, terrified at this strange exhibition, brought a quantity of wappatoo and laid it at his feet, begging him to put out the bad fire; while an old woman continued to speak with great vehemence, as if praying and imploring protection. After receiving the roots, Captain Clark put up the compass, and, as the match went out of itself, tranquillity was restored, though the women and children still sought refuge in their beds and behind the men. He now paid them for what he had used, and, after lighting his pipe and smoking with them, continued down the river."

The hunters still were killing some game, but it was so thin as to be unfit for use; six deer and an elk were left in the timber, while two deer and a bear were brought in. The wappatoo was now largely the food of all the Indians. The bulb, which grows in all the ponds of the interior, is gathered by the women, who, standing in deep water, feel about in the mud for the roots of the plant and detach the bulbs with their toes; these rise to the surface and are thrown into the canoe. The roots are like a small potato and are light and very nutritious.

A few days later they obtained from the Indians the skin of a "sheep" (mountain goat), which is described so that there is no doubt about the identification. The hunters also killed three black-tailed deer. Near Sepulcher Rock, a burial-place for the surrounding tribes, Captain Clark crossed the river in the endeavor to purchase a few horses, by which they might transport their baggage and some provisions across the mountains, but in this he was unsuccessful. However, some Indians were met, who promised a little later to meet them and furnish some horses. At the foot of the Great Narrows four were purchased to assist in carrying the baggage and the outfit over the portage.

The Indians at the upper end were rejoicing over the catching of the first salmon; and they were so good-natured that they sold the white men four more horses for two kettles, which reduced the stock of kettles to one. There was a good deal of trouble here from thefts by the Indians, and from their practice of trading articles and then returning and giving back the price that they had received and demanding articles that had been traded. So annoying did this become, that Captain Clark declared to the Indians in council assembled that the next man caught thieving would be shot; and a little bit later he was obliged to threaten to burn the village. At last, however, they got away, with ten horses, and proceeding up the river secured a few others. By this time they had exhausted pretty much all their trade goods, and the capacity to buy was about at an end. The Indian tribes that they were passing now did not

seem to be particularly friendly and held themselves aloof; but a chief of the Walla Wallas, whom they met a little later, treated them most hospitably, and in striking contrast to the people that they had lately seen. This chief presented Captain Clark with a fine horse, and received in return a sword, one hundred balls, some powder, and some other small presents. The chief helped them cross the river in his canoes, and they camped on the Columbia, at the mouth of the Walla Walla River. They now possessed twenty-three horses, and on the whole were in pretty good shape, except that they had but little food and had nothing left which they could trade for food. About the first of May they met a party of Indians, consisting of one of the chiefs of the Nez Percés who had gone down Lewis River with them the previous year and had been of great service to them, and had now come to meet them. They were now out of provisions, but at an Indian camp not far off managed to obtain two lean dogs and some roots. As they went on they learned that most of the Nez Percés were scattered out gathering spring roots, but the Indian in whose charge their horses had been left was not far away.

At this point the explorers were applied to by two or three persons who were ill, and their simple treatment benefiting the Indians, their fame greatly increased. The white men were careful to give the Indians only harmless medicine, trying to assist nature rather than to do anything that was radical. The Indians who had been benefited gave material evidence of their gratitude.

Since they had been on the Columbia River the Indians had made great fun of the white men because they ate dogs, and it was just after their experience in doctoring, but at another village, that "an Indian standing by, and looking with great derision at our eating dog's flesh, threw a poor half-starved puppy almost into Captain Lewis's plate, laughing heartily at the humor of it. Captain Lewis took up the animal and flung it back with great force into the fellow's face, and seizing his tomahawk, threatened to cut him down if he dared to repeat such insolence. He immediately withdrew, apparently much mortified, and we continued our dog repast very quietly." Continuing their journey, they were again applied to for medical advice and assistance, but declined to practice without remuneration. One or two small operations were performed, and a woman who had been treated, declaring the next day that she felt much better, her husband brought up a horse, which they at once killed.

Having crossed the river, on the advice of the Indians that more game was to be found, they kept on their way, and the day after the hunters brought in four deer, which, with the remains of the horse, gave them for the moment an abundant supply of food. Here they met Twisted Hair, in whose charge they had left their horses. He told them that, owing to the care that he had taken of their horses, he had been obliged to quarrel with other chiefs, who were jealous of him, and that finally he had given up the care of the horses, which were now scattered. They soon recovered twenty-one

of their horses—most of which were in good condition—a part of their saddles, and some powder and lead which had been put in the cache with them. The Indians gave them two fat young horses for food, asking nothing in return, and the hospitality and generosity of these Indians made a great impression on the white men, who were now disposed to treat them with a great deal more courtesy and consideration than had been their custom. Captain Lewis at this meeting is quite enthusiastic about these Chopunnish Indians, whom he describes as industrious, cleanly, and generous—a report quite different from that made on the way down the river.

At the village where they camped May 11, the Indians lived in a single house, one hundred and fifty feet long, built of sticks, straw, and dried grass. It contained about twenty-four fires, about double that number of families, and might muster, perhaps, one hundred fighting men. The difficulty of talking to these Indians was great, for Captains Lewis and Clark were obliged to speak in English to one of the men, who translated this in French to Chaboneau, who interpreted to his wife in Minnetari; she told it in Shoshoni to a young Shoshoni prisoner, who finally explained it to the Nez Percés in their own tongue. After the council was over, the wonders of the compass, the spy-glass, the magnet, the watch, and the air-gun were all shown to the Indians. Here they were obliged also to do a good deal of doctoring, and finally another council was held, at which it was agreed by the Indians to follow the advice of Captains Lewis and Clark. Presents were made by the



Indians to the whites, and to each chief was given a flag, a pound of powder, and fifty balls, and the same to the young men who had presented horses to them. They also paid the man who had charge of their horses, in part, agreeing with him to give the balance so soon as the remainder of the horses were brought in.

On the 14th of May they crossed the river and made a camp, where they purposed to wait until the snow had melted in the mountains. The hunters killed two bears and some small game, much of which they gave to the Indians, to whom it was a great treat, since they seldom had a taste of flesh. Many patients continued to be brought to them, whom they doctored, and with some success.

Early in June they began to make preparations to cross the mountains, though the Indians told them it would be impossible to do this before about the first of July. They were now well provided with animals, each man having a good riding horse, with a second horse for a pack, and some loose horses to be used in case of accident or for food. The salmon had not yet come up the river. They started on the 15th of June in a rain, and on the way found three deer, which their hunters had killed. They soon began to climb the mountains, and before long found themselves travelling over hard snow, which bore up their horses well; but it was evident that the journey would be too long to make, since for several days' travel there would be no food for the animals. So they were obliged to turn back and wait for the warmer weather.



Two men who had been sent back to the Indian village to hurry up the Indians who had promised to cross the mountains with them, and make peace with the Indians on the upper Missouri, returned with three Indians who agreed to go with them to the falls of the Missouri. A little later they started again, usually keeping on the divide, in order to head all streams and not cross any running water. The country was completely covered with snow. On the 26th of June they camped high up on the mountains, where there was good food for the horses. The travelling was pleasant, the snow hard. Their provisions had now about given out, however, except that they still had some roots; but now and then a deer was killed, which kept them from absolute starvation.

By July 1 they had reached a country where game was quite abundant, deer, elk, and big-horn being plenty in the neighborhood. It was determined to divide the party and to cover more country on the return than they had when coming out. Captain Lewis, with nine men, was to go to the falls of the Missouri, leave three men there to prepare carts for transporting baggage and canoes across the portage, and with the remaining six to ascend Maria's River and explore the country there. The remainder of the party were to go to the head of the Jefferson River, where nine men under Sergeant Ordway should descend it with the canoes. Captain Clark's party was to go to the Yellowstone, there build canoes, and go down that river with seven men; while Sergeant Pryor, with two others, should take the horses

overland to the Mandans, and thence go north to the British posts on the Assiniboine and induce Mr. Henry to persuade some of the Sioux chiefs to go with him to Washington. This plan was carried out.

Captain Lewis kept on to the Dearborn River. This was a good game country and they made rapid progress, and before long found themselves at their old station, White Bear Island. During the flood of the river the water had entered their cache and spoiled much of their property. They had much trouble here with lost horses, and one of their men, riding suddenly upon a bear, his horse wheeled and threw him, and the bear drove him up a tree where he was kept all day.

Captain Lewis now started to explore the Maria's River, and, following it up, almost reached the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Here they met a band of Indians, who stated that they were Gros Ventres of the Prairie, or, as Lewis and Clark put it, Minnetari of Fort de Prairie, and who, after some hesitation, appeared to be friendly enough, and smoked with Captain Lewis. They expressed themselves as willing to be at peace with the Indians across the mountains, but said that those Indians had lately killed a number of their relations. Captain Lewis kept a very close watch, fearing that the Indians would steal his horses. This did not happen, but on the following day, July 27, the Indians seized the rifles of four of the party. As soon as Fields and his brother saw the Indian running off with their two rifles they pursued him, and, overtaking him, stabbed him through the heart with a knife. The other guns

were recovered without killing any of the Indians; but as they were trying to drive off the horses, Captain Lewis ordered the men to follow up the main party, who were driving the horses, and shoot them. He himself ran after two other Indians, who were driving away another bunch of horses, and so nearly overtook them that they left twelve of their own animals but continued to drive off one belonging to the white men. Captain Lewis had now run as far as he could, and calling to the Indians several times that unless they gave up the horse he would shoot, he finally did so, and killed an Indian. The other men now began to come up, having recovered a considerable number of the horses; they had lost one of their own horses and captured four belonging to the Indians. They now retreated down the river with the horses that they had, but took nothing from the Indians' camp.

These Indians were probably not Gros Ventres, as stated in the Lewis and Clark journal. Precisely the same story was told me in the year 1888 by the oldest Indian in the Blackfoot camp, as having been witnessed by him in his boyhood on Birch Creek, a branch of the Maria's. Wolf Calf, the narrator, was considered much the oldest Indian in the Piegan camp, and was supposed to be more than ninety-five years old. The Indian killed by Fields was named Side Hill Calf. He said that he was a boy with the Indian war party.

Captain Lewis, believing that they would be promptly pursued by a much larger party of Indians and attacked, at once began a retreat. The Indian horses which had

been captured proved good ones, the plains were level, and they rode hard for more than eighty miles, only stopping twice to kill a buffalo and to rest their horses. They stopped at two o'clock in the morning, and at daylight started on again, and at last when they reached the Missouri they heard the report of a gun, and then a number of reports and before long had the satisfaction of seeing their friends going down the river. They landed, and Captain Lewis's party, after turning loose the horses, embarked, with the baggage, and kept on down the stream. Before long they met Sergeants Gass and Willard, who were bringing down horses from the falls, and now the whole party had come together, except Captain Clark's outfit, which had gone down the Yellowstone.

The journey down the Missouri was quickly made, and at the mouth of the Yellowstone a note was found from Captain Clark, who had gone on before them. Not far below this Captain Lewis, while hunting elk on a willow grove sand-bar, was shot in the thigh by his companion, Cruzatte, who apparently mistook him for an elk, he being clad in buckskin. At first Captain Lewis thought that they had been attacked by Indians, but no signs of Indians being found, the conclusion that Cruzatte had shot him, apparently by mistake, seemed inevitable. On August 12 they met Captain Clark's party, whose adventures had been much less startling than theirs. His party had started up Wisdom River, on the west side of the mountains, and, crossing over to the head of the Jefferson, had passed through a beauti-

ful country—the Beaverhead—very lovely in its surroundings, with fertile soil, and abounding in game.

Most of the party had gone down the river in canoes, but a few men had been left on the land to drive down the horses. A part of these, under Sergeant Ordway, kept on down the river, while at the mouth of the Madison, Captain Clark, with ten men and the wife and child of Chaboneau, taking the fifty horses, crossed over to go to the Yellowstone and descend it. When they reached the Yellowstone, they followed it down for some little time, through a country abounding in buffalo, deer, and elk. Very likely they would have gone on farther but for an accident to one of the men, who was so badly hurt that he could not sit on his horse. Small timber being found, canoes were constructed, which were lashed together and loaded preparatory to setting out. While all this was being done, twenty-four of their horses disappeared, and a little search showed a piece of rope and a moccasin, which made it clear that the horses had been run off by the Indians. Sergeant Pryor, with two men, was ordered to take the remaining horses down the river to the mouth of the Bighorn, where they could cross and from there he was to take them to the Mandans. The canoes which went on down the river passed various streams, and at one point came upon what appeared to have been a medicine lodge of the Blackfeet. At a stream to which they gave the name of Horse Creek, they found Pryor with his animals. He had had much trouble in driving the horses, since, as many of them had been used by the Indians

in hunting buffalo, whenever they saw a bunch of buffalo they would set off in pursuit of them. To prevent this, Sergeant Pryor was obliged to send one man ahead of the horse herd to drive away the buffalo.

From the top of Pompey's Pillar Captain Clark had a wide and beautiful prospect over the country, dotted everywhere by herds of buffalo, elk, and wolves. Bighorn were abundant here and farther down the stream, and the noise of the buffalo—for this was now the rutting season—was continuous. The large herds of elk were so gentle that they might be approached within twenty paces without being alarmed. The abundance of buffalo was so great that the travellers were in great fear, either that they would come into their camp at night and destroy their boats by trampling on them, or that the herds, which were constantly crossing the river, would upset the boats. Bears, also, were very abundant, and quite as fierce as they had been on the Missouri. Captain Clark killed one, the largest female that they had seen, and so old that the canine teeth had been worn quite smooth. Mosquitoes here were terribly abundant; several times, it is said, they alighted on the rifle barrels in such numbers that it was impossible to take sight.

On August 8 they were joined by Sergeant Pryor and his men, who had no horses; every one of them had been taken off the second day after they left the party by Indians. They followed them for a short distance, but without overtaking them; and finally coming back to the river, built two row-boats, in which they came down the stream with the utmost safety and comfort. On the



11th of August they met two trappers who had left Illinois in the summer of 1804, and had spent the following winter with the Tetons, where they had robbed and swindled a French trader out of all his goods. They told Captain Clark that the Mandans and Minnetaris were at war with the Arikaras, and had killed two of them, and also that the Assiniboines were at war with the Mandans, news which could not have been very pleasing to the explorers, whose efforts on their way up the river had been so strong for peace.

The party having come together on August 12, they kept on down the river, and two days later reached the village of the Mandans. Here they had protracted councils with the Mandans and Minnetaris, and tried hard to persuade some of them to go on with them to Washington. Colter applied to the commanding officers for permission to join the two trappers who had come down the river to this point, and he was accordingly discharged, supplied with powder and lead, and a number of other articles which might be useful to him. The next day he started back up the river. What Colter's subsequent adventures were is well known to any one who has followed the course of early exploration in the West. Colter's Hell, if we recollect right, was the first name ever applied to the geyser basins of the Yellowstone Park.

Though the Mandans and Minnetaris were as friendly and hospitable as possible, and gave them great stores of corn, none of the principal men would consent to go to Washington. They promised, however, to be more



attentive to the requests of the white men, to keep the peace with their neighbors, and were greatly pleased and proud of the gift to the chief of the Minnetaris, Le Borgne, of the swivel, for which Captain Clark no longer had any use, as it could not be discharged from the canoes on which they were travelling. Here, too, they discharged their interpreter, Chaboneau, who wished to remain with his wife and child. One of the chiefs, Big White, consented, with his wife and child, to accompany the white men. Before the expedition finally left the village there was a last talk with the Indians, who sent word to the Arikaras by Captain Clark, inviting them to come up and meet them, and saying that they really desired peace with the Arikaras, but that they could place no dependence on anything that the Sioux might say.

Keeping on down the river, they found game plenty and the mosquitoes troublesome. At the Arikara village they were well received, and found there a camp of Cheyennes, also friendly. The Rees expressed willingness to follow the advice that Captain Clark had given them, but made many excuses for the failure to follow their counsels of the year before. The Cheyenne chief invited the white men to his lodge, and Captain Clark presented a medal to the chief, to that individual's great alarm, for he feared that it was "medicine" and might in some way harm him. The Cheyennes are described as friendly and well-disposed, though shy.

The trip down the river was unmarked by adventure. Enormous quantities of buffalo were seen, and

on the 30th of August they came upon a party of Teton Sioux, under a chief called Black Bull. Other Sioux were seen, and on September 3 they came to the trading post of a Mr. James Airs, who presented each of the party with as much tobacco as he could use for the rest of the voyage, and also gave them a barrel of flour. Below the mouth of the Big Sioux River they passed Floyd's grave, which they found had been opened. Two days later they passed the trading post of one of the Choteaus and a little later the Platte, and at last, on September 20, reached the little village of La Charette. On September 23 they reached St. Louis and went on shore, where they received "a most hearty and hospitable welcome from the whole village."

## CHAPTER XIII

### ZEBULON M. PIKE

#### I

**S**IDE by side in fact—though by no means in popular estimation—with the heroic explorers, Lewis and Clark, stands Zebulon M. Pike, the young soldier, who first reached the sources of the Mississippi, later those of the Arkansas, and who was one of the first genuine Americans to see the Spanish City of the Holy Faith. Born in New Jersey in 1779, Pike entered the army in his father's regiment about the year 1794. In July, 1805, a lieutenant, he was detailed, by order of General James Wilkinson, to explore the sources of the Mississippi. From this expedition he returned in 1806, and shortly afterward set out on an expedition up the Kansas River to the country of the Osages, and thence to the Kitkahahk village of the Pawnees, then on the Republican River. From here he went westward to the sources of the Arkansas River, in what is now Colorado. On this expedition he approached Santa Fé, was captured by the Spaniards, and escorted south through Mexico and what is now Texas to the Spanish-American boundary on the borders of the present State of Louisiana, where he was set free.

It would be perhaps difficult to point out, since Revolutionary times, a more heroic figure than that of Pike, or to name a man who did more for his country. It is chiefly as an explorer that we must now consider him, and must briefly tell the history of his journeyings for two years through that country which was then Louisiana; yet his subsequent and involuntary wanderings through Mexico and Texas cannot be separated from his earlier travels. Some time after his return from the Southwest, he wrote a book, which was issued four years before the journal of Lewis and Clark. In reviewing his life of exploration, we shall in large measure let him tell his own story.

On the 9th of August, 1805, with one sergeant, two corporals, and seventeen privates, Pike started from St. Louis up the Mississippi River in a keel boat seventy feet long and provisioned for four months. The water was swift, the way hard, and they had much foul weather, which held them back, and made their days and nights uncomfortable. Occasionally they saw fishing camps of Indians, and passed the farms of some Frenchmen, lately transferred without their knowledge or consent from allegiance to old France to citizenship in the new United States.

One of Pike's especial duties was to conciliate the Indians he met, and, so far as possible, to arrange for peace between warring aboriginal tribes. On the 20th he came to a Sac village, where he had a talk with the Indians, who listened to him respectfully, and appeared to agree to what he said. Further along he met villages



LIEUTENANT ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE, MONUMENT AT  
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO.





of the Reynards, or Foxes, showing that at this time the Sacs and Foxes were living separately, though allies.

The way was long, and progress, though often covering thirty or forty miles a day, was slow, owing to the windings of the river. Pike was now approaching that debatable land over which the Sioux and Sauteurs or Ojibwas were continually fighting backward and forward. He tells of meeting, September 1, Monsieur Dubuque, who told him that these tribes were then engaged in active hostilities, and, among other things, that a war party "composed of Sacs, Reynards, and Puants (Winnebagoes), of 200 warriors, had embarked on an expedition against the Sauteurs, but they had heard that the chief, having had an unfavorable dream, persuaded the party to return, and that I would meet them on my voyage." This is interesting, as showing that at this time the Sacs and Foxes, who are of Algonquin stock, had allied themselves with the Winnebagoes of Siouan stock against people of the latter race.

Indians were abundant here, and were always on the lookout for enemies. The firing of guns by Pike's party, who had landed to shoot wild pigeons, was the signal for some Indians in the neighborhood to rush to their canoes and hastily embark. Indeed, Pike was told that all the Indians had a dread of Americans, whom they believed to be very quarrelsome, very brave, and very much devoted to going to war; a reputation which had undoubtedly reached the savages through the English and French traders.

A little further along, the Ouisconsing River was

reached, and they met the Fols Avoine Indians, the Menominees, a tribe still existing at Green Bay, Wisconsin. Further on he had a meeting with a number of Sioux and Pike reports the council:

"On the arrival opposite the lodges, the men were paraded on the bank with their guns in their hands. They saluted us with ball with what might be termed three rounds; which I returned with three rounds from each boat with my blunderbusses. This salute, although nothing to soldiers accustomed to fire, would not be so agreeable to many people; as the Indians had all been drinking, and as some of them even tried their dexterity, to see how near the boat they could strike. They may, indeed, be said to have struck on every side of us. When landed, I had my pistols in my belt and sword in hand. I was met on the bank by the chief, and invited to his lodge. As soon as my guards were formed and sentinels posted, I accompanied him. Some of my men who were going up with me I caused to leave their arms behind as a mark of confidence. At the chief's lodge I found a clean mat and pillow for me to sit on, and the before-mentioned pipe on a pair of small crutches before me. The chief sat on my right hand, my interpreter and Mr. Frazer on my left. After smoking, the chief spoke to the following purport.

" 'That notwithstanding he had seen me at the Prairie (du Chien), he was happy to take me by the hand among his own people, and there show his young men the respect due to their new father (President Jefferson). That, when at St. Louis in the spring, his father (Gen-

eral Wilkinson) had told him that if he looked down the river he would see one of his young warriors (Pike) coming up. He now found it true, and he was happy to see me, who knew the Great Spirit was the father of all, both the white and the red people; and if one died the other could not live long. That he had never been at war with their new father, and hoped always to preserve the same understanding that now existed. That he now presented me with a pipe, to show to the upper bands as a token of our good understanding, and that they might see his work and imitate his conduct. That he had gone to St. Louis on a shameful visit, to carry a murderer; but that we had given the man his life, and he thanked us for it. That he had provided something to eat, but he supposed I could not eat it, and if not, to give it to my young men.'

"I replied: 'That although I had told him at the Prairie my business up the Mississippi, I would again relate it to him.' I then mentioned the different objects I had in view with regard to the savages who had fallen under our protection by our late purchase from the Spaniards; the different posts to be established; the objects of these posts as related to them, supplying them with necessaries, having officers and agents of Government near them to attend to their business; and above all, to endeavor to make peace between the Sioux and Sauteurs. 'That if it was possible on my return I should bring some of the Sauteurs down with me, and take with me some of the Sioux chiefs to St. Louis, there to settle the long and bloody war which had existed be-

tween the two nations. That I accepted his pipe with pleasure, as the gift of a great man, the chief of four bands, and a brother; that it should be used as he desired.' I then eat of the dinner he had provided, which was very grateful. It was wild rye [rice] and venison, of which I sent four bowls to my men.

"I afterward went to a dance, the performance of which was attended with many curious maneuvers. Men and women danced indiscriminately. They were all dressed in the gayest manner; each had in the hand a small skin of some description, and would frequently run up, point their skin, and give a puff with their breath, when the person blown at, whether man or woman, would fall, and appear to be almost lifeless, or in great agony, but would recover slowly, rise, and join in the dance. This they called their great medicine, or, as I understood the word, dance of religion, the Indians believing that they actually puffed something into each others' bodies which occasioned the falling, etc. It is not every person who is admitted; persons wishing to join them must first make valuable presents to the society to the amount of forty or fifty dollars, give a feast, and then be admitted with great ceremony. Mr. Frazer informed me that he was once in the lodge with some young men who did not belong to the club; when one of the dancers came in they immediately threw their blankets over him and forced him out of the lodge; he laughed, but the young Indians called him a fool, and said 'he did not know what the dancer might blow into his body.'

“I returned to my boat, sent for the chief, and presented him with two carrots of tobacco, four knives, half a pound of vermilion, and one quart of salt. Mr. Frazer asked liberty to present them some rum; we made up a keg between us of eight gallons—two gallons of whiskey, the rest water. Mr. Frazer informed the chief that he dare not give them any without my permission. The chief thanked me for all my presents, and said ‘they must come free, as he did not ask for them.’ I replied that ‘to those who did not ask for anything, I gave freely; but to those who asked for much, I gave only a little or none.’

“We embarked about half-past three o’clock, came three miles, and camped on the west side. Mr. Frazer we left behind, but he came up with his two peroques about dusk. It commenced raining very hard. In the night a peroque arrived from the lodges at his camp. During our stay at their camp there were soldiers appointed to keep the crowd from my boats, who executed their duty with vigilance and rigor, driving men, women, and children back whenever they came near my boats. At my departure, their soldiers said, ‘As I had shaken hands with their chief, they must shake hands with my soldiers.’ In which request I willingly indulged them.”

Pike was now journeying through the country passed over forty years before by Carver, and he was evidently familiar with his journeyings. Of La Crosse prairie he says:

“On this prairie Mr. Frazer showed me some holes

dug by the Sioux when in expectation of an attack, into which they first put their women and children, and then crawl themselves. They were generally round and about ten feet in diameter, but some were half-moons and quite a breastwork. This I understood was the chief work, which was the principal redoubt. Their modes of constructing them are, the moment they apprehend or discover an enemy on the prairie, they commence digging with their knives, tomahawks, and a wooden ladle; and in an incredibly short space of time they have a hole sufficiently deep to cover themselves and their families from the balls or arrows of the enemy. They (enemies) have no idea of taking these subterraneous redoubts by storm, as they would probably lose a great number of men in the attack; and although they might be successful in the event, it would be considered a very imprudent action."

Heretofore but little food had been killed by the expedition, except pigeons; but they were now getting into a country where there was more or less game. On September 14, Pike, who had gone ashore with three others of his party to hunt, saw abundant sign of elk, but failed to see any of them, though his men saw three from the boat; and from this time forth more or less mention is made of game by short entries, such as, "Saw three bear swimming over the river." "Killed a deer," "killed three geese and a raccoon," and other similar notes.

On the 23d of September Pike held a council with the Sioux, who, hearing by a rumor of his arrival in the



country, returned from a war party on which they had set out. He talked with these Sioux, on many matters of which the principal one was the granting by the Indians of a site near the Falls of St. Anthony for a military post, as well as the establishment of peace between the Ojibwas and Sioux. Three important chiefs named Little Crow, Risen Moose, and the Son of Pinchow, replied, promising him about a hundred thousand acres of land, as well as a safe conduct for himself and such Ojibwa chiefs as he might bring back with him. They were doubtful, however, about the prospects of making a peace with their old-time enemies. The treaty, or grant, was drawn up and signed, and the Sioux returned to their homes.

The following day the flag from Pike's boat was missing. This he naturally regarded as a very serious misfortune. He punished his sentry, and calling up his friend, Risen Moose, told him of the trouble, and urged him to try to recover the flag, for he was not by any means sure that it had not been stolen by an Indian. However, the next day he was called out of bed by Little Crow, some of whose people had found the flag floating in the water below their village, and believing that this must mean that the white men had been attacked, Little Crow had come up to see what the matter was. The appearance of the flag at Little Crow's village had put an end to a quarrel which was in progress between his people and those of a chief called White Goose. Pike says: "The parties were charging their guns, and preparing for action, when lo! the flag ap-



peared like a messenger of peace sent to prevent their bloody purposes. They were all astonished to see it. The staff was broken. Then Petit Corbeau arose and spoke to this effect: 'That a thing so sacred had not been taken from my boat without violence; that it would be proper for them to hush all private animosities until they had revenged the cause of their eldest brother; that he would immediately go up to St. Peter's to know what dogs had done that thing, in order to take steps to get satisfaction of those who had done the mischief.' They all listened to this reasoning; he immediately had the flag put out to dry, and embarked for my camp. I was much concerned to hear of the blood likely to have been shed, and gave him five yards of blue stroud, three yards of calico, one handkerchief, one carrot of tobacco, and one knife, in order to make peace among his people. He promised to send my flag by land to the falls, and to make peace with Outard Blanche." The flag was returned two days later by two young Indians, who had brought it overland.

It was now October, and clear weather, the thermometer falling sometimes to zero. Hitherto the principal food killed had been geese, swans, and prairie chickens; but on October 6 Pike saw his first elk—two droves of them. As they kept on up the river, geese, ducks, and grouse, with occasionally a deer, continued to be secured. Frequently Pike found hanging to the branches of the trees sacrifices left there by the Indians. These were sometimes bits of cloth, or articles of clothing, or painted skins. As the weather grew colder, and ice

was often met with, Pike began to think of a place where he should winter. The boats were becoming very leaky, and the men, terribly overworked, were losing strength and becoming inefficient. He therefore determined to make a permanent camp, afterward called Pike's Fort, and to leave a part of his men there in block-houses while he proceeded up the river; but before the separation took place, there was much to be done. Happily, the country abounded in game, so that for those who were to be left behind there would be no danger of starvation. Pike went out one morning and killed four bears, while his hunters killed three deer.

Log houses were built, and several small canoes were made for travel on the river. But after his canoes were launched and loaded, one of them sank and wet his ammunition, and in endeavoring to dry the powder in pots he blew up the powder and the tent in which he was working. It being necessary to build another canoe, Pike again went off to hunt to a stream where much elk and buffalo sign had been seen. The day following was spent in hunting, but with very little result; and the account which Pike gives of it shows how little the explorer and his party knew about the game that they were pursuing, or the proper methods of securing it. He says: "I was determined, if we came on a trail of elk, to follow them a day or two in order to kill one. This, to a person acquainted with the nature of those animals and the extent of the prairie in this country, would appear—what it really was—a very foolish resolution. We soon struck where a

herd of one hundred and fifty had passed; pursued, and came in sight about eight o'clock, when they appeared, at a distance, like an army of Indians moving along in single file; a large buck, of at least four feet between the horns, leading the van, and one of equal magnitude, bringing up the rear. We followed until near night without once being able to get within point blank shot. I once made Miller fire at them with his musket at about four hundred yards' distance; it had no other effect than to make them leave us about five miles behind on the prairie. Passed several deer in the course of the day, which I think we could have killed, but did not fire for fear of alarming the elk. Finding that it was no easy matter to kill one, I shot a doe through the body, as I perceived by her blood where she lay down in the snow; yet, not knowing how to track, we lost her. Shortly after saw three elk by themselves, near a copse of woods. Approached near them and broke the shoulder of one, but he ran off with the other two just as I was about to follow. Saw a buck deer lying on the grass; shot him between the eyes, when he fell over. I walked up to him, put my foot on his horns, and examined the shot; immediately after which he snorted, bounced up, and fell five steps from me. This I considered his last effort; but soon after, to our utter astonishment, he jumped up and ran off. He stopped frequently; we pursued him, expecting him to fall every minute; by which we were led from the pursuit of the wounded elk. After being wearied out in this unsuccessful chase, we returned in pursuit

of the wounded elk, and when we came up to the party, found him missing from the flock. Shot another in the body, but my ball being small, he likewise escaped. Wounded another deer; when, hungry, cold, and fatigued, after having wounded three deer and two elk, we were obliged to encamp in a point of hemlock woods on the head of Clear River. The large herd of elk lay about one mile from us in the prairie. Our want of success I ascribe to the smallness of our balls, and to our inexperience in following the track after wounding the game, for it is very seldom a deer drops on the spot you shoot it.

“Sunday, November 3.—Rose pretty early and went in pursuit of the elk. Wounded one buck deer on the way. We made an attempt to drive them into the woods, but their leader broke past us, and it appeared as if the drove would have followed him, though they had been obliged to run over us. We fired at them passing, but without effect. Pursued them through the swamp until about ten o'clock, when I determined to attempt to make the river, and for that purpose took a due south course. Passed many droves of elk and buffalo, but being in the middle of an immense prairie, knew it was folly to attempt to shoot them. Wounded several deer but got none. In fact, I knew I could shoot as many deer as anybody, but neither myself nor company could find one in ten, whereas one experienced hunter would get all. Near night struck a lake about five miles long and two miles wide. Saw immense droves of elk on both banks. About sundown saw a

herd crossing the prairie toward us. We sat down. Two bucks, more curious than the others, came pretty close. I struck one behind the fore shoulder; he did not go more than twenty yards before he fell and died. This was the cause of much exultation, because it fulfilled my determination; and, as we had been two days and nights without victuals, it was very acceptable. Found some scrub oak. In about one mile made a fire, and with much labor and pains got our meat to it, the wolves feasting on one half while we were carrying away the other. We were now provisioned, but were still in want of water, the snow being all melted. Finding my drought very excessive in the night, I went in search of water, and was much surprised, after having gone about a mile, to strike the Mississippi. Filled my hat and returned to my companions.

“November 4.—Repaired my moccasins, using a piece of elk’s bone as an awl. We both went to the Mississippi and found we were a great distance from the camp. I left Miller to guard the meat, and marched for camp. Having strained my ankles in the swamps, they were extremely sore, and the strings of my moccasins cut them and made them swell considerably. Before I had gone far I discovered a herd of ten elk; approached within fifty yards and shot one through the body. He fell on the spot, but rose again and ran off. I pursued him at least five miles, expecting every minute to see him drop. I then gave him up. When I arrived at Clear River, a deer was standing on the other bank. I killed him on the spot, and while I was taking out the

entrails another came up. I shot him also. This was my last ball, and then only could I kill! Left part of my clothes at this place to scare the wolves. Arrived at my camp at dusk, to the great joy of our men, who had been to our little garrison to inquire for me, and receiving no intelligence, had concluded we were killed by the Indians, having heard them fire on the opposite bank. The same night we saw fires on the opposite shore in the prairie; this was likewise seen in the fort, when all the men moved into the works."

It was now the middle of November, and the river was closing up. Pike was obliged to hunt practically all the time, and was impatient of the slavish life led by the hunter, and the necessity of working all the time to support his party. Under such conditions the pursuit of game becomes work, and not play.

After the winter had finally set in, Indians began to be seen; some of them Sioux—Yanktons, and Sissetons—and some Menominees.

A considerable part of the month of December was spent at various camps along the Mississippi River, below the mouth of the Crow Wing River, and the time was devoted to killing game and making preparations for the northward journey. About the middle of the month Pike started with sleds, sometimes hauled by men across the prairies, and sometimes along the ice on the river, wherever it was heavy enough to bear the load. The way was hard, and sometimes only short trips could be made with the sleds. As there was little or no snow, the men were obliged to double up, hauling a sled for a



short distance, and then leaving it to go back and haul the next one along. One of the sleds broke through the ice, and everything it contained was wetted, including a considerable portion of the powder. Pike found his various duties laborious, for he was at once "hunter, spy, guide, commanding officer, etc."

In January he met a Mr. Grant, an English trader, by whom he was hospitably received and well treated. About the middle of the month, finding that his sleds were too heavy to be hauled through the snow, he manufactured toboggans, which would be more easily hauled, even though they carried smaller loads:

On the first of February he reached Lake La Sang Sue, now known as Leech Lake. This Pike believed to be the main source of the Mississippi. The lake crossed, he stopped at a trading-post of the Northwest Fur Company, where his men arrived five days later. Here he hoisted the American flag in place of the English flag which he had found still flying; and after a few days went north to Upper Red Cedar Lake, which we now know as Cass Lake, Minnesota. This was a country passed over in 1798 by David Thompson, a great explorer, whose journeyings, together with those of Alexander Henry, the younger, were edited by Dr. Elliott Coues.

Pike was now in the country of the Chippewas, whom he knew by their other name, Sauteurs, and on July 16 held a council with them, notifying them that the country was no longer in the possession of the British, advising them to make peace with the Sioux, and



asking some of their chiefs to go with him to St. Louis, where they should see General Wilkinson. His talk with the Indians was pleasantly received, and they made no difficulty about giving up their flags and medals, which were to be replaced by flags and medals of the Americans. Two well-known young men of the Sauteurs, living hereabout, expressed their willingness to accompany the explorer to St. Louis, and a day or two later Pike struck out in a southerly and south-easterly direction, to return to his fort on the Mississippi. He reached that river about March 1, and found all his people well.

Pike was now prepared to start south as soon as the river broke up, and to report success in all directions; a success due entirely to his own astonishing energy and industry, for he alone had made the expedition what it was. Something of what he felt he expressed when he wrote:

“Ascended the mountain which borders the prairie. On the point of it I found a stone on which the Indians had sharpened their knives, and a war-club half finished. From this spot you may extend the eye over vast prairies with scarcely any interruption but clumps of trees, which at a distance appear like mountains, from two or three of which the smoke rising in the air denoted the habitation of the wandering savage, and too often marked them out as victims to their enemies, from whose cruelty I have had the pleasure in the course of the winter and through a wilderness of immense extent to relieve them, as peace has reigned

through my mediation from the prairie Des Chiens to the lower Red River. If a subaltern with but twenty men at so great a distance from the seat of his Government could effect so important a change in the minds of these savages, what might not a great and independent power effect, if, instead of blowing up the flames of discord, they exerted their influence in the sacred cause of peace?"

He was frequently seeing Indians, and he was treated with great respect and hospitality by all of them. He was especially impressed by his neighbors, the Menominees, in whom he recognized many good qualities.

On the morning of April 7, 1806, the party started on the return journey, and made good time down the river, reaching the Falls of St. Anthony, where Minneapolis now stands, on the morning of April 10. Below here, on the following day, at the mouth of St. Peter's River, was found a camp of Sioux, including several bands, and Pike had a talk with them. The council-house was capable of containing 300 men, and there were forty chiefs present, and forty pipes set against the poles. At the council all these Sioux smoked the Chippewa pipes, excepting three, who were still mourning for their relations killed during the winter. Within the next two or three days he met important Sioux chiefs, Little Crow and Red Wing, who were extremely cordial, and emphatic in expressing their wish to carry out the instructions which Pike had given them.

From here down the river the journey was interrupted only by occasional talks with Indians, until Prairie Des

Chiens was reached, where there were many white people, and Pike received the first news of the outside world he had had for many months. He saw here a great game of lacrosse on the prairie between Sioux on one side and Winnebagoes and Foxes on the other. Councils were held here with various bands of Sioux, and with the Winnebagoes. On April 23 they once more started down the river, but were delayed by a head wind. Two days later Captain Many, of the United States Army, was met on his way up the river in search of some Osage prisoners among the Sacs and Foxes. At some of the Indian camps passed, all the people were drunk—sure sign of the proximity of the white men.

This practically completes Pike's voyage, for he reached St. Louis April 30, after an absence of eight months and twenty-two days.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ZEBULON M. PIKE

#### II

ON his return to St. Louis, after nearly nine months of the hardest possible work in the North, Pike was allowed but a short rest. Two months and a half later he set out on his Western journey, which was to last a year, and during which he was to meet with vicissitudes which no one could have foreseen. It is not strange that he should have been chosen for the work of exploration in the South-west, which had for its object the investigation of the heads of the rivers flowing through the newly acquired Louisiana, making acquaintance with the Indians inhabiting the region, and putting an end to the constant wars between the different tribes. The good results achieved along the Mississippi had proved his especial fitness for similar work in other portions of the new domain of the United States, and were reason enough for giving Pike the command of this expedition. But it is altogether possible that General Wilkinson, then the commanding officer stationed at St. Louis, in charge of the whole Western country, may have had an ulterior object in sending Pike to investigate the Spanish boundaries of

the South-west. It had been more than suspected that in some way Wilkinson was mixed up with the Aaron Burr conspiracy. Whether he was so or not, the Spanish authorities of Mexico believed that he was, and believed that the expedition led by Pike, of which they were informed well in advance, was connected with this conspiracy, and had for its object the acquiring of information detrimental to Spanish interests.

At all events the Spaniards had made every preparation to meet Pike and to capture his party, while Pike himself was intent only on carrying out his instructions to explore the heads of these Western rivers, and was ignorant of the existence of Burr's conspiracy.

On July 15, 1806, Pike sailed from St. Louis up the Missouri River. With him were a lieutenant, a surgeon—Dr. Robinson—one sergeant, two corporals, sixteen privates, and one interpreter—twenty-one soldiers and two civilians—or twenty-three in all. Several of the party had been with Pike in the North. There were fifty-one Indians who had been redeemed from captivity among the Pottawatomies, and were now to be returned to the Osage and Pawnee tribes, to which they belonged. Two days after leaving St. Louis the party stopped at Mr. Morrison's, and there met a young man named George Henry, who wanted to go West, and after a little time was engaged to accompany the party. He was a good French scholar and spoke some Spanish.

Progress with the boats, which were rowed up the stream, was of course slow, and Lieutenant Wilkinson

and Dr. Robinson, with the Indians, marched across the country, while the boats toilfully pulled up the river. They killed some game, chiefly deer and turkeys. The Indians had a season of mourning each day about daylight, the crying continuing for about an hour. The interpreter told Pike that this was the custom, not only with those who had recently lost their relatives, but also with others who recalled to mind the loss of some friend, dead long since, and joined the other mourners purely from sympathy. They appeared extremely affected; tears ran down their cheeks, and they sobbed bitterly; but in a moment they would dry their cheeks and cease their cries. Their songs of grief ran: "My dear father exists no longer; have pity on me, O Great Spirit! You see I cry forever; dry my tears and give me comfort." The warriors' songs were: "Our enemies have slain my father [or mother]; he is lost to me and his family; I pray to you, O Master of Life, to preserve me until I avenge his death, and then do with me as thou wilt."

On the 28th of July the party reached the mouth of the Osage River, and on the next day turned up the stream, heading for the Osage villages, where they were to leave a part of their Indians, and were to impress on the Osages the power and importance of the United States Government. Game was quite abundant, and deer and turkeys were killed daily; two, three, five, and on one day even nine deer having been taken, for the large body of men required considerable food.

There was trouble with the Indians from time to time. Some became jealous of their wives, and quarrelled with

other men, and on one occasion there was some pilfering. But, on the whole, Pike managed the Indians extremely well. On the 14th of August a canoe was met coming down the river, manned by engagees of Mr. Chouteau, of St. Louis, by whom Pike sent letters to General Wilkinson. Relatives of the returned Osage prisoners came out to receive them. The meeting was very tender and affectionate, "wives throwing themselves into the arms of their husbands, parents embracing their children, and children their parents; brothers and sisters meeting, one from captivity, the other from the towns; they at the same time returning thanks to the good God for having brought them once more together; in short, the *tout ensemble* was such as to make polished society blush when compared with those savages, in whom the passions of the mind, whether joy, grief, fear, anger, or revenge, have their full scope."

Sans Oreille (one of the Osages) made them a speech: "Osage, you now see your wives, your brothers, your daughters, your sons, redeemed from captivity. Who did this? Was it the Spaniards? No. The French? No. Had either of those people been governors of the country, your relatives might have rotted in captivity, and you never would have seen them; but Americans stretched forth their hands and they are returned to you! What can you do in return for all this goodness? Nothing; all your lives would not suffice to repay their goodness." This man had children in captivity, not one of whom the party had been able to obtain for him.

In the Osage village Pike was well received, but a few



days in the town and its neighborhood showed him some of the uncertainties of attempting to deal with a strange people. He had great difficulty in purchasing horses for his intended trip to the Pawnees, and where he had secured horses, some of them were stolen from him. However, after considerable difficulty, he got started, taking with him a number of Osages, warriors and chiefs, whom he wished to have make peace with the Pawnees, and also some of the redeemed Pawnee captives. From the very start, however, the Osages were a trouble to him, for they were constantly leaving him to return to their village, urged to do so by dreams or by laziness, or perhaps by fear of what their reception might be among the Pawnees. From the Osage village Pike travelled nearly south along the Osage River for several days; and then turning west, crossed Grand River, a tributary of the Arkansas, and going nearly due west to the head of this stream, crossed over the divide to the Smoky Hill fork of the Kansas River. Along Grand River game was very abundant, and here we have a glimpse of a quality in Pike which we must admire. "On the march," he tells us, "we were continually passing through large herds of buffalo, elk, and cabrie [antelope], and I have no doubt that one hunter could support two hundred men. I prevented the men shooting at the game, not merely because of the scarcity of ammunition, but, as I conceived, the laws of morality forbid it also."

On September 22 they began to meet Pawnees; and two days later others joined them, who possessed mules,

horses, bridles, and blankets, which they had obtained of the Spaniards. Only a few of these Pawnees wore breech cloths, most of them being clad only in buffalo robes. On September 25 Pike had come close to the Pawnee village, which was situated on the Republican fork of the Kansas River, quite a long way above the mouth of the Solomon. Preparations to receive them, and to smoke with the Osages, were made by the Pawnees. The visiting Indians sat down on the prairie and the whites were a short distance in advance of them. The Pawnees came out from their village, halted about a mile from the strangers, and then, dividing into two troops, charged down upon them, singing their war song, shouting the war cry, rattling their lances and bows against their shields, and in all respects simulating the character of genuine warfare. The two bodies of Pawnees passed around the strangers and halted, and the chief of the Pawnees advanced to the centre of the circle and shook hands. One of the Osages offered the chief a pipe, and he smoked. The whole party then advanced to the village, and when near to it again halted. Again the Osages sat down in a row, facing the village, and now some of the Pawnees came to them with pipes and invited one and another to smoke; the Osages did so, and each received from the man whose pipe he smoked a stick, which represented a horse. These Pawnees no doubt belonged to the Republican Pawnees, or Kitkahahk tribe, the second in importance of the four Pawnee tribes.

Four days later a council was held at which not less than four hundred warriors were present. Pike's notes of this interesting occasion were seized by the Spanish authorities later, and he never recovered them. He gives, however, this interesting flag incident: "The Spaniards had left several of their flags in this village, one of which was unfurled at the chief's door the day of the grand council; and among various demands and charges I gave them was that the said flag should be delivered to me, and one of the United States' flags received and hoisted in its place. This, probably, was carrying the pride of nations a little too far, as there had so lately been a large force of Spanish cavalry at the village, which had made a great impression on the minds of the young men, as to their power, consequence, etc., which my appearance with twenty infantry was by no means calculated to remove.

"After the chiefs had replied to various parts of my discourse, but were silent as to the flag, I again reiterated the demand for the flag, adding 'that it was impossible for the nation to have two fathers; that they must either be the children of the Spaniards or acknowledge their American father.' After a silence of some time an old man rose, went to the door, took down the Spanish flag, brought it and laid it at my feet; he then received the American flag, and elevated it on the staff which had lately borne the standard of his Catholic Majesty. This gave great satisfaction to the Osage and Kans, both of whom decidedly avow themselves to be under American protection. Perceiving that every face in the council

was clouded with sorrow, as if some great national calamity were about to befall them, I took up the contested colors, and told them 'that as they had shown themselves dutiful children in acknowledging their great American father, I did not wish to embarrass them with the Spaniards, for it was the wish of the Americans that their red brethren should remain peaceably around their own fires, and not embroil themselves in any disputes between the white people; and that for fear the Spaniards might return there in force again, I returned them their flag, but with an injunction that it should never be hoisted again during our stay.' At this there was a general shout of applause, and the charge was particularly attended to."

The raising of the American flag by Pike in the village of the Pawnee Republicans on September 29, 1806, marks perhaps the first formal display of that flag by a soldier in the territory west of the immediate banks of the Mississippi River. This has properly been regarded as an occasion of very great importance and one well worthy of commemoration. The Historical Society of Kansas, on September 30, 1901, unveiled with appropriate ceremonies a monument to Pike at Cortland, Kansas, a point which has been identified as the site of the ancient Kitkahahk village at which he stopped, when he held his council with the Indians, and took down the Spanish flag and raised that of his own country.

For some days Pike remained with the Pawnees, and these must have been days of more or less anxiety. The Indians had no sentiments of attachment for either

Americans or Spaniards, but they had undoubtedly been much impressed by the greater power of the Spaniards, as evidenced by the expedition which had but just left them, and they were not without fear that wars might occur between the representatives of the different nations, from which wars they would gain nothing and might lose much. The Pawnee chief endeavored to turn Pike back, saying that he had persuaded the Spaniards to forego their intention of proceeding farther to the east, and that he had promised the Spaniards that he would turn back the Americans. He told Pike that he must give up his expedition and return, and that if he were unwilling to do this the Pawnees would oppose him by force of arms. Pike, of course, declined to turn back, and intimated that an effort to stop him would be resisted.

For some days now he was trading with the Indians for horses, but they were unwilling to sell them, and some of those newly purchased disappeared. However, on the 7th of October he marched from the village, moving a little west of south. The lost horses had by this time been returned. On the second day out he was overtaken by about one-third of the Pawnees, who remained with them only a short time. A little later Pike's party discovered some elk, which they pursued, and these running back in sight of the Pawnees were chased by them. "Then, for the first time in my life," said Pike, "I saw animals slaughtered by the true savages with their original weapons, bows and arrows; they buried the arrow up to the plume in the animal."

They met Pawnees from time to time for a few days, and on the 15th Pike and Dr. Robinson left the party, and lost them, not finding them until the 18th. Their camp was on the Arkansas River, where Pike built boats, to send Lieutenant Wilkinson and some men down the river, and so back to the settlements. On the 28th Lieutenant Wilkinson, in a skin canoe, made of four buffalo and two elk hides, and one wooden canoe, proceeded down the river. The party consisted of Lieutenant Wilkinson, five white men, and two Osage Indians.

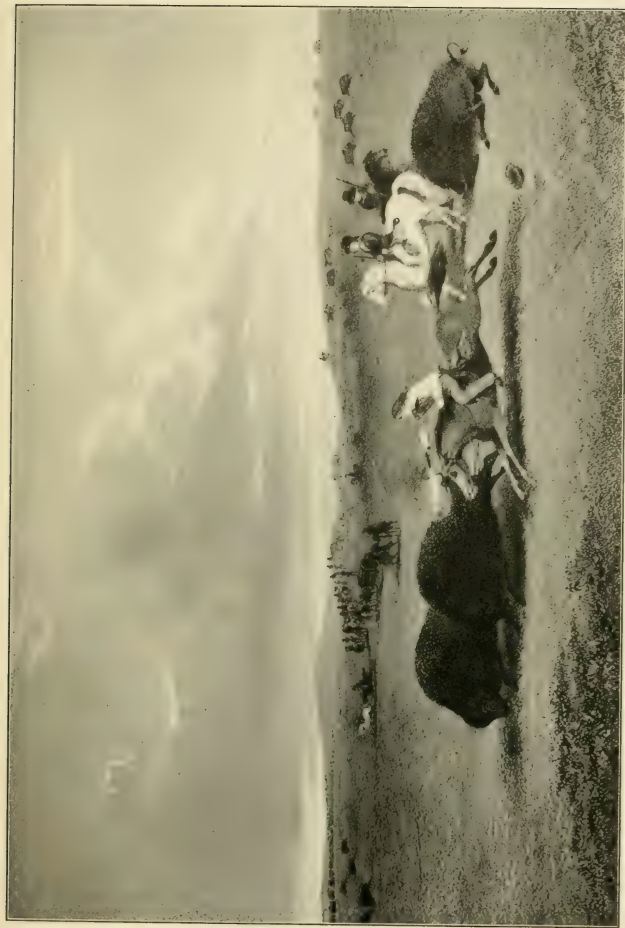
From here for a long distance Pike's route lay up the Arkansas River. Soon they came into a country abounding in buffalo, antelope, and wild horses. The antelope were so curious that they came up among the horses to satisfy their curiosity, and the men could not resist the temptation of killing two, although they had plenty of meat. At the report of the gun the game "appeared astonished, and stood still until we hallowed at them, to drive them away." Herds of horses were seen, which came up very close to the command. An effort was made to rope some of the wild horses, but as the animals ridden by the men were slow, and the ropers were without experience, the attempt was unsuccessful; and of this Pike says: "I have since laughed at our folly, for taking wild horses in that manner is scarcely ever attempted, even with the fleetest horses and most expert ropers." The method pursued by the Spanish in Texas to capture wild horses was not unlike the old Indian fashion of taking buffalo. "They



take a few fleet horses and proceed into the country where the wild horses are numerous. They then build a large strong inclosure, with a door which enters a smaller inclosure; from the entrance of the large pen they project wings out into the prairie a great distance, and then set up bushes, to induce the horses, when pursued, to enter into these wings. After these preparations are made they keep a lookout for a small drove, for, if they unfortunately should start too large a one, they either burst open the pen or fill it up with dead bodies, and the others run over them and escape; in which case the party are obliged to leave the place, as the stench arising from the putrid carcasses would be insupportable; and, in addition to this, the pen would not receive others. Should they, however, succeed in driving in a few, say two or three hundred, they select the handsomest and youngest, noose them, take them into the small inclosures, and then turn out the remainder; after which, by starving, preventing them taking any repose, and continually keeping them in motion, they make them gentle by degrees, and finally break them to submit to the saddle and bridle. For this business I presume there is no nation in the world superior to the Spaniards of Texas."

As they proceeded westward they found the prairie covered with buffalo, most of them cows and calves. Pike dilates on their numbers, and speaks of the excellence of the flesh of the buffalo, which he says was "equal to any meat I ever saw, and we feasted sumptuously on the choice morsels." From time to time they





BUFFALO ON THE SOUTHERN PLAINS.

From Kendall's *Narrative of the Texas Santa Fé Expedition*.



came upon the trail of the Spaniards, returning to their mountain homes, and counted the fires about which these people had encamped. Now their horses were beginning to grow poor and weak, owing to the scanty pasturage; and now, too, November 12, Pike passed beyond the borders of the present Kansas and into what is now the State of Colorado.

On November 15, "at 2 o'clock in the afternoon I thought I could distinguish a mountain to our right, which appeared like a small blue cloud; viewed it with the spy-glass, and was still more confirmed in my conjecture, yet only communicated it to Dr. Robinson, who was in front with me; but in half an hour they appeared in full view before us. When our small party arrived on the hill they with one accord gave three cheers to the Mexican mountains. Their appearance can easily be imagined by those who have crossed the Alleghanies; but their sides were whiter, as if covered with snow, or a white stone. Those were a spur of the grand western chain of mountains which divide the waters of the Pacific from those of the Atlantic Ocean; and the spur divides the waters which empty into the Bay of the Holy Spirit from those of the Mississippi, as the Alleghanies do those which discharge themselves into the latter river and the Atlantic. They appear to present a natural boundary between the province of Louisiana and New Mexico, and would be a defined and natural boundary." On the same day they came to the Purgatory River, or River of Souls. Here the Arkansas appeared to carry much more water than below, and was apparently navigable.

## CHAPTER XV

### ZEBULON M. PIKE

#### III

ON November 22, as Pike and Dr. Robinson, and Vasquez, the interpreter, were riding ahead of the command, they met a party of sixty Pawnees returning from an unsuccessful war party. Half of them were armed with guns, and about half with bows, arrows and lances. They met the white men in a very friendly manner, but crowded about them; and at the same time treated them in so boisterous and disrespectful, and yet good-natured a way, as to cause them some uneasiness. Pike prepared to smoke with them, and offered them some small presents, with which they were quite dissatisfied; so that for some time the pipes "lay unmoved, as if they were undetermined whether to treat us as friends or enemies; but after some time we were presented with a kettle of water, drank, smoked and ate together." The Pawnees treated the presents given them with more or less contempt, and some even threw them away.

"We began to load our horses, when they encircled us and commenced stealing everything they could.

Finding it was difficult to preserve my pistols, I mounted my horse, when I found myself frequently surrounded; during which some were endeavoring to steal the pistols. The doctor was equally engaged in another quarter, and all the soldiers in their positions, in taking things from them. One having stolen my tomahawk, I informed the chief; but he paid no respect, except to reply that 'they were pitiful.' Finding this, I determined to protect ourselves, as far as was in my power, and the affair began to take a serious aspect. I ordered my men to take their arms and separate themselves from the savages; at the same time declaring to them that I would kill the first man who touched our baggage. On which they commenced firing off immediately; we marched about the same time, and found they had made out to steal one sword, tomahawk, broad-ax, five canteens, and sundry other small articles. After leaving them, when I reflected on the subject, I felt myself sincerely mortified, that the smallness of my number obliged me thus to submit to the insults of lawless banditti, it being the first time a savage ever took anything from me with the least appearance of force."

It was near the end of November. Provisions were scarce; but on the 26th, Pike killed a "new species of deer"—a blacktail, or mule deer. The real troubles of the expedition were beginning, for the weather was growing cold, snow fell, and the water was freezing. The men who had started from St. Louis in July, prepared for a summer excursion, had worn out their shoes and clothing, and were half naked, in winter, among

the high mountains of the Rockies. Some of them froze their feet. They made such foot gear as they could from the hide of the buffalo, but many had used up their blankets, by cutting them to pieces for socks, and had nothing with which to cover themselves at night, no matter how cold the weather, or how deep the snow. Pike worked backward and forward among the canyons, on streams at the head of the Arkansas, and passed over the divide between that river and the head waters of the South Platte, and then back on to the Arkansas, near what is now called the Royal Gorge. Here he came on the site of an immense Indian camp, occupied not long before, which had a large cross in the middle; and which, though he then did not know it, was a big camp of Kiowas and Comanches, with whom had been a white man, James Pursley. The party was constantly suffering for food, and often went for days without eating, and were almost without protection from the weather. Pike never ceased his efforts to cross the mountains to the supposed head of the Red River (the Canadian), which he had been ordered to find. Deep though the snow might be, and bitter the cold, with his men and himself equally hungry and equally frozen, passing through a country almost impracticable for horses, where the animals themselves had to be dragged along, and often unloaded and hauled up steep mountain sides, he kept on. On some occasions the little party of sixteen were divided into eight different expeditions, struggling not along the trail, but to get over the mountains, on the one hand,

and on the other, to kill something which might give food to the party. Their guns now had begun to fail them; a number burst; others were bent and broken by the rough usage. Even Pike, who scarcely ever permits a word of complaint to escape him, says, on January 5, after breaking his gun: "This was my birthday, and most fervently did I hope never to pass another so miserably."

Matters had reached such a point that it was useless to attempt to drag the horses any further. Pike determined to build a small block-house, and leave there a part of his baggage, the horses, and two men; and then, with the remainder of their possessions on their backs, to cross the mountains on foot, find the Red River, and send back a party to bring on the horses and baggage by some easy route. They started on January 14, each carrying an average of seventy pounds, and marched nearly south, following up the stream now known as Grape Creek. They had not gone far before the men began to freeze their feet, and were unable to travel. They had little or no food, but, at last, Dr. Robinson, after two days' hunting, during which they met with constant misfortunes, managed to kill a buffalo, loads of which were brought back to camp. Leaving two of the disabled men behind, with as much provision as possible, promising to send relief to them as soon as they could, Pike and the others pushed on, making their slow way through the deep snow; They were soon again without food; and again the doctor and Pike, who appear to have been by all odds the men of the



party, succeeded in killing a buffalo, and satisfying the hunger of the company. It was on this day, January 24, that Pike heard the first complaint. One of his men declared "that it was more than human nature could bear, to march three days without sustenance, through snows three feet deep, and carry a burden only fit for horses." This was very bitter to the leader, and he administered a rebuke, which, though severe, was so eminently just and sympathetic as to increase the devotion which his men must have felt for such a leader.

For a little time they had food, and the weather became more mild. Now turning to the right, they crossed through the mountains, and came within sight of a large river, flowing nearly north and south. This, although the explorer did not know it, was the Rio Grande del Norte. Travelling down toward this stream, they came to a large west branch; and here Pike determined to build a fort, for a protection for a portion of his party, while the remainder should be sent back to bring on the men who had been left behind at different points. Deer were plenty, and it seemed to be a spot where life could be supported. Pike laid out a plan for his block-house, which was on the edge of the river, and was surrounded by a moat, and a dirt rampart.

From this point Dr. Robinson set out alone for Santa Fé. The purpose of his trip was to spy out the land, and to learn what he could with regard to the Spanish government, and the opportunities for trade there. In the year 1804, Mr. Morrison, a merchant of Kaskaskia, had sent across the plains a creole of the

country, one Baptiste La Lande, with goods which he was to trade at Santa Fé. La Lande had never returned, and it was believed that he had remained in Santa Fé, and had appropriated to himself the property of his employer. When Pike was about to start on his westward expedition, Mr. Morrison made over to him his claim on La Lande, in the hope that some of his property might be recovered, and this claim assigned to Robinson was the pretext for his trip to Santa Fé. In other words: Robinson was, as Dr. Coues remarked, a spy. It is true that Spain and the United States were not then at war, but there was a more or less hostile feeling between the two governments; or, if not between the two governments, at least between the citizens of the two powers residing on the borders of the respective territories. More than that, as already stated, the Aaron Burr conspiracy—with which Pike was wholly unacquainted—was known to the Spaniards, as was also Pike's starting for the west. The Spanish authorities unquestionably connected the two things, and were disposed to look with great suspicion on any Americans who entered their territory.

Dr. Robinson set out for Santa Fé on the 7th of February; and until the 16th Pike was occupied in hunting, building his block-house, reading, and studying. On the 16th, while hunting, he discovered two horsemen not far from him. These, when he attempted to retreat, pursued threateningly; but if he turned about to go toward them, they retired. As he was doubtful where he was, and uncertain if the territory was Span-

ish or American, he was unwilling to act on the aggressive; but finally he lured the horsemen so close to him that they could hardly get away, and after a little they explained their presence. It seemed that four days before Robinson had reached Santa Fé, and that the Governor had sent out these scouts to learn who the strangers were. The next day they departed for Santa Fé, which they said they would reach on the second day.

Within the next two or three days all the men he had left behind save two—Dougherty and Sparks—had come in; and on February 19 Sergeant Meek, with Miller, was ordered to go back to the point where they had left the interpreter, Vasquez, with one man and the horses, to bring them on, and on his way to pick up Dougherty and Sparks, who, on account of their frozen feet, had been unable to walk. Pike pays touching tribute to the heroism of his men, saying: "I must here remark the effect of habit, discipline, and example, in two soldiers soliciting a command of more than one hundred and eighty miles, over two great ridges of mountains covered with snow, inhabited by bands of unknown savages in the interest of a nation with which we were not on the best understanding. To perform this journey, each had about ten pounds of venison. Only let me ask, What would our soldiers generally think on being ordered on such a tour thus equipped? Yet these men volunteered it with others, and were chosen, for which they thought themselves highly honored."

On February 26 a detachment of Spaniards, con-

sisting of two officers, with fifty dragoons and fifty mounted militia, reached the post. The sentry halted them at a distance of fifty yards, and Pike made preparations for their reception. He insisted that the Spanish troops should be left at some little distance from the fort, while he would meet the officers on the prairie. This was done, and then he invited the officers to enter the fort, where he offered them his hospitality. It was then for the first time, Pike tells us, that he knew that the stream on which he was camped was not the Red River, meaning the Canadian, but was the Rio del Norte, which, though known by several other names, is what we now call the Rio Grande, and now forms the boundary line between Texas and Mexico. The officer in command stated that the Governor of New Mexico had ordered him to offer Pike mules, horses, money, or whatever he might need to conduct him to the head of the Red River, and requested Pike to visit the Governor at Santa Fé. Pike at first declined to go without his whole command, but after a time was persuaded to go to Santa Fé, leaving two men in the post to meet the Sergeant and his party, and to convey to them his orders to come to Santa Fé.

Naturally Pike did not wish to resist this invitation, or to be put in the position of committing hostilities on the foreign soil which he had invaded, since his orders did not commit him to any such course. Having made the error of entering the territory of another power, he thought it better to explain matters, rather than to commit an act which might involve his country in war. His

compliance with the request of the Spanish officer seemed to be received by them with great satisfaction; but, he says, "it appeared to be different with my men, who wished to have 'a little dust,' as they expressed themselves, and were likewise fearful of treachery." After making the necessary preparations, and leaving orders for Sergeant Meek, Pike set out with the Spaniards to their camp on the Rio del Norte, and thence to Santa Fé. His passage through the country was an interesting one, and everywhere he was treated with the greatest kindness and hospitality by the people. At the pueblo of San Juan he met the man Baptiste La Lande, who professed to be an American, and endeavored to learn from Pike something of his journeying and his purpose; but Pike, suspecting his designs, and after a little talk satisfying himself as to what they were, had the man shut in a room, and threatened him with death if he did not confess his perfidy. La Lande was greatly frightened, and declared that he had been ordered by the Government to find out everything possible about Pike.

Not only did the common people treat Pike's men with great kindness and hospitality, but the priests and those of the better class were courteous, cordial, and very much interested in the explorer.

Santa Fé was reached March 3. It then had a supposed population of four thousand five hundred souls, most of whom, we may imagine, turned out to see the Americans. Pike's visit with the Governor was brief. He denied that Robinson was attached to his party,

excusing himself to himself on the ground that Robinson was a volunteer, and could not properly be said to be one of his command. The Governor's reception was haughty and unfriendly. Pike bore himself with great dignity and wasted no words. At a later interview that day his papers were examined by the Governor, and after they had been read his manner changed, and he became much more cordial. Pike's trunk was locked and the key given to him, the trunk to be put in charge of an officer, who was instructed to escort him to Chihuahua, where he was to appear before the Commandant-General. That night he dined with the Governor, and received from him money for the expenses of himself and men as far as Chihuahua.

The story of the march from Santa Fé to Chihuahua is interesting. Not far from Albuquerque they met Dr. Robinson. He was hardly recognized by Pike, for he was fat, sleek, and well looking, as different as possible from that Robinson who had left the camp on the head waters of the Rio del Norte, "pale, emaciated, with uncombed locks and beard of eight months' growth, but with fire, unsubdued enterprise, and fortitude."

The party crossed the Rio Grande at El Paso del Norte, then a great crossing-place for travellers north and south, and just over the river from our present Texas town of El Paso, situated on one of the great transcontinental railroads.

Chihuahua was reached April 2, and Pike immedi-



ately had an interview with the Governor, who treated him with reasonable consideration. Almost the whole month of April was passed here, and during this time Pike was entertained by the people of the town, among whom, we may infer, he was regarded partly in the light of a hero, and partly in the light of a curiosity. On one occasion he was warned by the Governor that he spoke too freely with regard to religion, government, and other matters, to which he made a very free response, justifying himself for whatever he had done. Pike left Chihuahua April 28. He had become suspicious that there was danger that his private notes would be taken from him, so he took his small note-books and concealed them in the barrels of the guns of his men. It was now May, the weather growing very warm and dry; and sometimes as they marched they suffered from lack of water. Almost everywhere Pike continued to be received with great kindness by the people, both in the towns and by the rich hacendados, whose ranchos were passed in the country. He frequently met men of English, Irish, and American birth, most of whom were kind to him; and, on one occasion, conversed gladly with an American whom he shortly afterward learned to be a deserter from the United States Army. This made him very indignant, and he sent word to the proprietor of the house where they were stopping that if this deserter appeared at another meal all the Americans would decline to eat. His firmness brought an apology from the host, who took steps that the deserter should not again appear.



The month of June was spent in journeying through Texas, eastward, to the borders of Louisiana. Pike speaks in the warmest terms of the two Governors, Cordero and Herrera, whom he met at San Antonio. They, and all the other Spaniards whom he met in Texas, were kind to him. On the first of July the party reached Natchitoches about four P. M. "Language cannot express the gayety of my heart when I once more beheld the standard of my country waved aloft. 'All hail!' cried I, 'the ever sacred name of country, in which is embraced that of kindred, friends, and every other tie which is dear to the soul of man!'"

It was in August, 1806, while he was on his way westward, on this second expedition, that Pike was promoted to be a captain, and his promotion to a majority followed soon after his return. With successive promotions in 1809, he became lieutenant-colonel, and with the coming of the war of 1812, Pike, now a colonel, was sent to guard the northern frontier. He was appointed to be brigadier general March 12, 1813. There was some fighting, but not much; but on April 27, 1813, while leading an attack on Fort York—now Toronto—he was killed by the explosion of the magazine, which the retreating enemy had fired. As an eye-witness said: The Governor's house, with some smaller buildings, formed a square at the centre battery, and under it the grand magazine, containing a large quantity of powder, was situated. As there were only two or three guns at this battery, and it but a short distance from the garrison, the troops did not remain

in it, but retreated to the latter. When the Americans, commanded by one of their best generals, Pike, reached this small battery, instead of pressing forward, they halted, and the general sat down on one of the guns; a fatal proceeding, for, in a few minutes, his advance guard, consisting of about three hundred men and himself, were blown into the air by the explosion of the grand magazine.

“ . . . I heard the report, and felt a tremendous motion in the earth, resembling the shock of an earthquake; and, looking toward the spot, I saw an immense cloud ascend into the air. I was not aware at the moment what it had been occasioned by, but it had an awfully grand effect; at first it was a great confused mass of smoke, timber, men, earth, etc., but as it arose, in a most majestic manner, it assumed the shape of a vast balloon. When the whole mass had ascended to a considerable height, and the force by which the timber, etc., were impelled upwards became spent, the latter fell from the cloud and spread over the surrounding plain.”

Struck by a fragment of rock, Pike was mortally wounded. As he was being taken on board the flagship “Madison,” he heard the cheering on the shore. He asked what it meant, and was told that the Stars and Stripes were being hoisted over the captured fort. A little later the captured British flag was brought to him; he motioned to have it put under his head, and soon after this had been done he died.

It is a melancholy commentary on the shortness of human fame that to-day the number of Americans who

know who Pike was is very small. Few men have done more than he for their country. Few men in their time have attracted more attention. Pike's name has been given to mountains, counties, cities, villages, and even to islands, rivers, and bays; and while, as Dr. Coues suggests, it may well enough be that not all these are named after Pike the explorer, yet we may be sure that the enthusiasm of the people for Pike at the time of his death, and for some time afterward, led to the giving his name to many natural features of the land, and to many political divisions within the States. After all, Pike's most impressive and most enduring monument must always remain the superb mountain which bears his name. If Pike did not discover this, "the grim sentinel of the Rockies," which towers fourteen thousand one hundred and forty seven feet above the sea, at least he was one of the first Americans to see it. He calls it, fitly, the Grand Peak. Nearly fourteen years later, during Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains, it was named James Peak; but this name, though often mentioned in books, did not long endure, and the name Pike's Peak, first used some time during the decade between 1830 and 1840—for example in Latrobe's "Rambler in America"—is now firmly established, and will ever remain the mountain's designation.

The death of Pike at the early age of thirty-four, so soon after he had attained the summit of his ambition, the rank of general and at the moment when the force under his command had won a notable victory, seems

very pathetic; and yet, after all, may not this have been a happy fate? For we cannot tell what sorrows and disappointments a longer life might have brought to him. It seems almost as though he may have had a premonition of the fate in store for him, since, in his last letter to his father, written just before he set out on his expedition, he writes as follows:

“I embark to-morrow in the fleet at Sackett’s Harbor, at the head of a column of one thousand five hundred choice troops, on a secret expedition. If success attends my steps, honor and glory await my name; if defeat, still shall it be said we died like brave men, and conferred honor, even in death, on the American name.

“Should I be the happy mortal destined to turn the scale of war, will you not rejoice, O my father? May heaven be propitious, and smile on the cause of my country. But if we are destined to fall, may my fall be like Wolfe’s—to sleep in the arms of victory.”

It was so that Pike fell asleep.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ALEXANDER HENRY (THE YOUNGER)

#### I

**A**MONG the northmen who overran the country long known as the Hudson's Bay Territory, Alexander Henry, the younger, was a commanding figure. He was a nephew of that other Alexander Henry whose adventures have been described earlier in this book. To Alexander Henry, the younger, we owe the most curious and complete record ever printed of the daily life of the fur trader in the north.

Alexander Henry, the younger, was a diarist; he kept a journal in which he set down, in the most matter-of-fact way, everything that happened to him, and, as has been said by Dr. Coues, "it mirrors life in a way Mr. Samuel Pepys might envy could he compare his inimitable diary with this curious companion piece of *causerie*, and perceive that he who goes over the sea may change his sky, but not his mind."

The wonderful journal of Henry's slept for nearly a century. Where the original may be we do not know, but a copy was made by George Coventry about the year 1824, and this copy about seventy years later came

under the notice of Dr. Elliott Coues, whose studies of the old West, have furnished so great a mass of material from which the student of history may glean information.

The diary covers a period of about fifteen years, from 1799 to 1814, during which time Henry travelled from Lake Superior to the Pacific. He lived in and travelled through, at various times, the Canadian Provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Assiniboia, Keewatin, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia; while in the United States his travels were through Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. In these long journeys he met many different tribes of Indians, and saw much of the Chippewas, the three tribes of the Blackfeet, the Crees, Assiniboines, Sioux, Sarcees, and other northern tribes, while in his southern journeyings he reached the Mandans, the Minitari, the Rees, and even the Cheyennes, south of the Missouri River, and on the west coast saw many tribes of the Columbia.

The journal begins in the autumn of 1799, when he was camped on the White Earth River, near the foot of what is now known as Riding Mountain, in Manitoba, a little west of Portage La Prairie. Here he had stopped after his journey from Montreal, to trade with the Indians the liquor, blankets, strouding, and various trinkets the Indians liked. He made that fall a clear profit of seven hundred pounds. This was his first trial in the Northwest.

In the summer of 1800 Henry was on his way west-

ward, with a brigade of canoes, each of which carried twenty-eight pieces of goods, ten of which were kegs of rum of nine gallons each; loads which sunk the canoes to the gunwales. He was proceeding by the Grande Portage to Lake Winnipeg, over the road which, even then, was being travelled by many fur traders. Wherever he found Indians, they were usually drunk, and when drunk always troublesome. They crossed the Lake of the Woods, and ran down the river Winnipeg. At Portage de Lisle one of the canoes, to avoid the trouble of making this portage, passed down near the north shore with a full load. "She had not gone many yards when, by some mismanagement of the foreman, the current bore down her bow full upon the shore against a rock, upon which the fellow, taking advantage of his situation, jumped, while the current whirled the canoe around. The steersman, finding himself within reach of the shore, jumped upon the rock, with one of the midmen; the other midman, not being sufficiently active, remained in the canoe, which was instantly carried out and lost to view among the high waves. At length she appeared, and stood perpendicularly for a moment, when she sank down again, and I then perceived the man rising upon a bale of drygoods in the midst of the waves. We made every exertion to get near him, and did not cease calling out to him to take courage, and not let go his hold; but alas! he sank under a heavy swell, and when the bale arose the man appeared no more. At this time we were only a few yards from him; but while we were eagerly looking out



for him, poor fellow, the whirlpool caught my canoe, and before we could get away she was half-full of water. We then made all haste to get ashore, and go in search of the property. The canoe we found flat upon the water, broken in many places. However, we hauled her ashore, and afterwards collected as many pieces as we could find. The men had landed a few packages above the rapid, otherwise our loss would have been still greater."

On August 16 they entered Lake Winnipeg, and were almost wrecked by a storm, the wind blowing violently over a shoal flat, and raising a tumbling sea. Wild-fowl were plenty; so were also Rocky Mountain locusts, which Henry said were thrown up on the beach to a depth of six to nine inches. He shot a white pelican, of which many were seen. From here Henry went up the Red River to establish a trading-fort, and on the way up he divided his goods, one-half of which were to be sent to Portage La Prairie on the Assiniboine River. The Indians here were chiefly canoe and foot people, and had few horses. Pigeons were very numerous, as were also fish, and the Indians had some dried buffalo meat, which was purchased from them. Fruit was abundant along the bank; plums of three different sorts, peminas, and grapes.

A number of Indians had joined him, all of whom wanted liquor and supplies. He gave them more or less liquor, with the result that most of them were drunk much of the time, and showed no disposition either to hunt or to trap. As they proceeded up Red River, they

approached the country ranged over by the Sioux, between whom and the Ojibwas there was everlasting war. The Indians were therefore in a continual state of alarm, and every time a shot was heard they thought that the enemy were about to attack them. They were now close to the country of the buffalo, and the Indians were bringing in fresh meat. Henry speaks of the abundance of these animals at his camp of August 26, where, he says, "The ravages of the buffaloes at this place are astonishing to a person unaccustomed to these meadows. The beach, once soft black mud, into which a man would sink knee-deep, is now made hard as pavement by the numerous herds coming to drink. The willows are entirely trampled and torn to pieces; even the bark of the smaller trees is rubbed off in many places. The grass on the first bank of the river is entirely worn away. Numerous paths, some of which are a foot deep in the hard turf, come from the plains to the brink of the river, and vast quantities of dung gives this place the appearance of a cattle yard. We have reached the commencement of the great plains of Red River, where the eye is lost in one continuous level westward. Not a tree or a rising ground interrupts the view." Here he had his first experience in running buffalo, and merely for the amusement of it killed not a few.

The Indians continued drinking and fighting among themselves. No one as yet had been killed, but more than one had been severely injured. Now, however, they had used up all their liquor, and Henry refused to give them any more; so that while many continued to

loaf about and beg for drink, some went hunting. Keeping on up the Red River, he pushed on southward, being anxious to reach a country where the beaver seemed to be plenty. Game was very abundant—buffalo, elk and bears. “Whilst we were arranging camp I saw a bear on the east side of the river, a little above us, coming down to drink. I crossed over and followed him; he instantly stopped within a few paces, and ran up a large oak. I shot him between the shoulders, and he fell to the ground like a rock, but in a moment was scampering away as fast as he could. I traced him by the blood, and soon found him sitting under a brush heap, grumbling and licking his wounds. A second shot dispatched him. By the hideous scream he uttered when he fell from the tree, I imagined he was coming at me, and was waiting for him with my second barrel cocked, when he ran off. I went for my two men, and it was hard work for us three to drag him to the canoe; he was very fat. I found that my first ball had gone through his heart. I was surprised that he should have been so active after a wound of that kind.”

Early in September, Henry, having passed up Red River as far as the mouth of Park River, decided to build there, and began the work of cutting house logs and erecting his stockades. Game was astonishingly abundant, bears being so plenty that they were killed almost daily. Three men came in with twelve bears; a hunter returned with four bears, and so on. Now that they were settled, Henry began to give out to the Indians their debts; by which is meant that he furnished

them the articles that they needed for hunting and for their life during the winter, charging them with the articles, which were to be paid for by skins—that is, the value of a beaver skin. He prepared a seat in a tall oak, which he used as a lookout station, and from which he had an extensive view. Every morning he used to climb to the top of this oak and look over the country, not only to see where the game was, but also to see if people were moving about. After the stockade had been finished, the houses were built, and then came the task of preparing food for the winter. Meantime, the Indians had persuaded Henry again to give them liquor, and they were once more drunk and quarrelling. Happily, when fighting, they did not use their guns or bows, but only their knives; and so, although men and women were frequently severely stabbed and cut, there were no immediate fatalities.

Henry was a good deal of a hunter, and much of his journal is given up to accounts of what he killed. Indian alarms were as frequent as ever, but none of them amounted to anything, being causeless panics. In October Henry made a journey down the river, to look up some of the people that he had sent off to establish small trading-posts. On his return, about the middle of October, he found that his hunter had killed a large grizzly bear, about a mile from the fort, and mentions that these bears are not numerous along Red River, but are more abundant in the Hair Hills. This is one of the most eastern records for the grizzly bear, although Long—*Voyages and Travels*, London, 1791

—speaks as if they were sometimes found a little further eastward, even east of the west end of Lake Superior.

A little later Henry, with one of his hunters and another man, set off in search of the Red Lake Indians, whom he wished to inform that he had established a trading-post here. The journey was long, and much of it through thick woods and underbrush, and it almost proved fruitless. However, he at length came across a young Indian, who was very much frightened at seeing them, but finally realizing that they were friends, talked freely to them. The Indian reported that his people were at Red Lake waiting for traders, and Henry tried to persuade him to bring them into his fort. Henry then returned to his post.

Winter was now approaching. The Indians were making the mats with which they covered their huts in winter, while many of the men were preparing to go to war. An interesting note on wolves appears here, under date of Sunday, November 2: "Last night the wolves were very troublesome; they kept up a terrible howling about the fort, and even attempted to enter Maymiutch's hut. A large white one came boldly into the door, and was advancing toward a young child, when he was shot dead. Some of them are very audacious. I have known them to follow people for several days, attempt to seize a person or a dog, and to be kept off only by firearms. It does not appear that hunger makes them so voracious, as they have been known to pass carcasses of animals which they might have eaten to their fill, but they would not touch flesh,

their object seeming to be that of biting. The Canadians swear that these are mad wolves, and are much afraid of them."

Another note of interest to the zoologist is this: "We saw a great herd of cows going at full speed southward, but on coming to our track, which goes to Salt Lake, they began to smell the ground, and as suddenly as if they had been fired at, turned toward the mountain. It is surprising how sagacious these animals are. When in the least alarmed, they will smell the track of even a single person in the grass, and run away in the contrary direction. I have seen large herds walking very slowly to pasture, and feeding as they went, come to a place where some persons had passed on foot, when they would instantly stop, smell the ground, draw back a few paces, bellow, and tear up the earth with their horns. Sometimes the whole herd would range along the road, keeping up a terrible noise, until one of them was hardy enough to jump over, when they would all follow, and run some distance." On November 8, with an Indian, Henry started in search of Indians about Grand Forks. Although the weather had been cold and snowy, it had now turned warm again, and they had much trouble in crossing streams and sloughs. They went south, to what Henry's Indian told him was the border of the Sioux country, and old camping-grounds were pointed out, which the Indian said were Sioux. Beaver appeared to be very numerous, but they killed nothing, making no fire, and firing no guns, and keeping their horses always close to them.



In describing the country passed over, Henry speaks of the Schian River, a tributary of the Red River, which flows into it about ten miles north of Fargo. This, he says, "takes its name from a formerly numerous tribe of Indians who inhabited its upper part. They were a neutral tribe between the Sioux and Saulteurs for many years, but the latter, who are of a jealous disposition, suspected that they favored the Sioux. A very large party having once been unsuccessful in discovering their enemies, on their return wreaked their vengeance on those people, destroying their village, and murdering most of them. This happened about sixty years ago, when the Saulteurs were at war with their natural enemies, the Sioux, of the plains, who are the only inhabitants of St. Peter's River. The Schians, having been nearly exterminated, abandoned their old territory, and fled southward across the Missouri, where they are now a wandering tribe."

This story agrees very well with the traditions related by the Cheyennes to-day, except that the modern stories put back these wars with the Saulteurs much further than 1740. On November 13 Henry reached the post again, having failed to find any of the people that he looked for. Moreover, when he got here he received a messenger from Langlois, one of his clerks at a trading-post at the Panbian (Pembina) Mountains, reporting that a number of more or less turbulent Crees and Assiniboines were gathering there, and that Henry's presence was needed to quiet them. Two days later he set off, stopping at Bois Percé, where "I remained



about an hour with the worthless vagabonds, who do nothing but play at the game of platter. Nothing is heard but the noise of the dish, and children bawling from hunger; their scoundrelly fathers are deaf to their cries until necessity obliges them to kill a bull for their sustenance." On his arrival at the post, he found all his people well, and the trouble apparently over.

The weather was now very cold. Swans were passing south in astonishing numbers. Now the men took no more raccoons with their traps, for these animals had begun to hibernate in the hollow trees, where they would remain like the bears until spring, without any sustenance.

Some time before, an Indian named Crooked Legs, while drunk, had very severely stabbed his young wife, who now, however, had perfectly recovered. At a drinking-match, held at the post, just after Henry's return, this woman, in revenge, gave her old husband a cruel beating with a stick, and afterward burned him shockingly with a brand snatched from the fire.

Rum was constantly desired by the Indians, and was begged for on every pretext. If a woman's husband died, or a man's wife, they came to Henry to beg, or buy, rum to cheer their hearts in their sorrow. A curious trapping incident is reported November 28. "La Rocque, Sr., came in with his traps, with a skunk, a badger, and a large white wolf, all three caught in the same trap at once, as he said. This was thought extraordinary—indeed a falsehood—until he explained the affair. His trap was made in a hollow stump, in

the center of which there was a deep hole in the ground. He found the wolf, just caught, and still alive. He despatched him, and, on taking him out, noticed something stirring and making a noise in the hole in the ground. Upon looking in he perceived the badger, which he killed with a stick, and upon pulling him out, smelt the horrid stench of the skunk, which was in one corner of the hole. He soon despatched him also. From this the Indians all predicted some great misfortune, either to the person to whom the traps belonged, or to our fort."

Two days later some of the men went raccoon hunting, the weather being warm. "They returned in the evening with seven, which they had found in one hollow tree. The size of this tree was enormous, having a hollow six feet in diameter, the rim or shell being two feet thick, including the bark. Raccoon hunting is common here in the winter season. The hunter examines every hollow tree met with, and when he sees the fresh marks of the claws, he makes a hole with an ax, and then opens the hollow place, in which he lights a fire, to find out if there be any raccoons within, as they often climb trees in the autumn, and, not finding them proper for the purpose, leave them, and seek others. But if they be within, the smoke obliges them to ascend and put their heads out of the hole they enter. On observing this, the ax is applied to the tree; with the assistance of the fire it is soon down, and the hunter stands ready to despatch the animals while they are stunned by the fall. But sometimes they are so

obstinate as to remain at the bottom of the hole until they are suffocated or roasted to death. The bears, both grizzly and common black, which reside on Red River, take to hollow trees also, and are hunted by the Indians in the same manner as raccoons. But the bears in the Hair Hills and other places never take to the trees for their winter quarters; they reside in holes in the ground, in the most intricate thicket they can find, generally under the roots of trees that have been torn up by the wind, or have otherwise fallen. These are more difficult to find, requiring good dogs that are naturally given to hunt bears. The reason why the bears differ so widely in the choice of their winter habitations is obvious. The low lands along the river, where the woods principally grow, are every spring subject to overflow, when the ice breaks up. The mud carried down with the current and left on the banks, makes their dens uncomfortable. On the Hair Hills and other high lands, where the ground is free from inundation, the soft and sandy soil is not so cold as the stiff black mud on the banks of the river, which appears to be made ground. Frequently, on digging holes in winter, we found the frost had penetrated the ground nearly four feet, like one solid body of ice, while in high, dry, sandy soil it seldom exceeds one foot in depth."

Winter had now set in, as well by the calendar as by temperature. It was ushered in by a great prairie fire, which seemed likely to burn over the whole country. At first it was supposed that the Sioux had fired the prairie, but later it appeared that the Crees had done it

by accident. These Crees reported that they had seen a calf as white as snow in a herd of buffalo; and Henry mentions how greatly white buffalo are esteemed among the nations of the Missouri, but that they are not valued by the Crees and Assiniboinés, except to trade to other tribes. Occasionally buffalo are seen that are dirty gray, but these are very rare. Christmas and New Year passed, these holidays being celebrated by drinking, so that for New Year's Day Henry says: "By sunrise every soul of them was raving drunk—even the children." Buffalo were now seen in great abundance, and came within gun-shot of the fort. A day or two later it was necessary to go out only a short distance from the fort to kill buffalo, but the cold was so intense that it was impossible to cut up those killed. On January 2 there arrived at the fort, Berdash, a man who, as used to be not very uncommon, wore the dress and busied himself with the occupations properly belonging to women. He was a swift runner, and was considered the fleetest man among the Saulteurs. "Both his speed and his courage were tested some years ago on the Schian River, where Monsieur Reaume attempted to make peace between the two nations, and Berdash accompanied a party of Saulteurs to the Sioux camp. They at first appeared reconciled to each other, at the intercession of the whites, but on the return of the Saulteurs, the Sioux pursued them. Both parties were on foot, and the Sioux had the name of being extraordinarily swift. The Saulteurs imprudently dispersed in the plains, and several of them were

killed, but the party with Berdash escaped without any accident, in the following manner: One of them had got from the Sioux a bow, but only a few arrows. On starting and finding themselves pursued, they ran a considerable distance, until they perceived the Sioux were gaining fast upon them, when Berdash took the bow and arrows from his comrades, and told them to run as fast as possible, without minding him, as he feared no danger. He then faced the enemy, and began to let fly his arrows. This checked their course, and they returned the compliment with interest, but it was so far off that only a chance arrow could have hurt him, as they had nearly spent their strength when they fell near him. His own arrows were soon expended, but he lost no time in gathering up those that fell near him, and thus he had a continual supply. Seeing his friends some distance off, and the Sioux moving to surround him, he turned and ran full speed to join his comrades, the Sioux after him. When the latter approached too near, Berdash again stopped and faced them, with his bow and arrows, and kept them at bay. Thus did he continue to maneuver until they reached a spot of strong wood, which the Sioux dared not enter. Some of the Saulteurs who were present have often recounted the affair to me. It seemed the Sioux from the first were inclined to treachery, being very numerous and the others but few. The Saulteurs were well provided with guns and ammunition, but on the first meeting were surrounded, and the guns taken away from them, in return for which the Sioux gave them bows and arrows;

but in a manner to be of little use, giving one a bow and no arrows, another a quiver of arrows, but no bow."

On January 14 he was awakened by the bellowing of buffalo, and found the plains black, and apparently in motion. An enormous herd of buffalo surrounded the fort, and were moving northward, extending south as far as the eye could see. "I had seen almost incredible numbers of buffalo in the fall, but nothing in comparison to what I now beheld. The ground was covered at every point of the compass as far as the eye could reach, and every animal was in motion. All hands soon attacked them with a tremendous running fire, which put them to a quicker pace, but had no effect in altering their course. The first roads beaten in the snow were followed by those in the rear. They passed in full speed, until about nine o'clock, when their numbers decreased, and they kept further off in the plains. There was about fifteen inches of snow on a level, in some places drifted in great banks. Notwithstanding the buffalo were so numerous, and twelve guns were employed, we killed only three cows and one old bull, but must have wounded a great number." The next day the plains were still covered with buffalo, moving northward; and this continued for a day or two. The stock of winter provisions was now all laid in—an abundance of good, fat buffalo meat. In February the buffalo began to get poor, as they always do at that time, and toward the end of the month some of the men caught a cow on the ice of the river, the dogs having



surrounded her, and the men entangling her legs in a line, so that she fell on her side; they then dragged her, still alive, to the fort, when she jumped to her feet and ran to attack the dogs. Two men mounted on her back, but she was as active with this load as before, jumping and kicking at the dogs in most agile fashion.

On February 28 an Indian brought in a spring calf, which he had found dead, an unusually early birth. The Indians declared that this meant an early spring.

The first outarde—Canada goose—was seen March 12, and on the same day a swan. On this day, too, it was noted that the sap of the box-elder began to run; this yields a fine white sugar, but not so sweet as that from the real sugar maple (*Acer*). He notes that bittersweet is abundant along the Red River, and that the Indians eat it in time of famine.

Now the river, on account of melting snow, began to rise, and to lift up the ice. Henry began to get out his canoes and mend them up for the summer use. Wild-fowl made their appearance in great numbers, and on the 23rd young calves were seen by the men. And now, the ice of the river coming down, carried with it great numbers of dead buffalo from above, which had been drowned in crossing the river while the ice was weak. Their numbers were astonishing. Often they were drifted to the shore, where the women cut up some of the fattest for their own use, the flesh seeming to be fresh and good. On the 7th of April one of his men brought in to Henry three wolves born this spring; another had brought in six, which he had found in one



hole, and which were now very tame. It was proposed to keep them for sledge dogs in winter.

A little later the odor of the decaying buffalo lying there along the river was terrible. In fact, on his journey down the river with his goods, which were now to be despatched to Montreal, the stench of the drowned buffalo was such that Henry could not eat his supper.

At last he despatched his goods, and about the first of June left for the Grand Portage. The proceeds of the winter's trade amounted to nearly two thousand pounds, Halifax currency.



TWO MEN MOUNTED ON HER BACK, BUT SHE WAS AS ACTIVE WITH THIS LOAD AS BEFORE.



## CHAPTER XVII

### ALEXANDER HENRY (THE YOUNGER)

#### II

**I**N August, 1801, Henry was on his way to a new post on the Pembina, the one which Langlois had established the year before. He intended to establish also a post at Grandes Fourches, the site of the present town of Grand Forks, North Dakota. This business, and his travels to other subsidiary trading-posts that he built at various points, occupied the autumn. Game was abundant, and so were fish. The Hudson's Bay Company, the opposition, were not far off, and there was some intercourse between the men of the two companies. On March 14, during a drinking-match, occurred one of the fights among the Indians which were so common in those days of abundant liquor. "Gros Bras, in a fit of jealousy, stabbed Auposoi to death with a hand-dague; the first stroke opened his left side, the second his belly, and the third his breast. He never stirred, although he had a knife in his belt, and died instantly. Soon after this, Auposoi's brother a boy about ten years of age, took the deceased's gun loaded it with two balls, and approached Gros Bras' tent. Putting the muzzle of the gun through the door,

the boy fired the two balls into his breast, and killed him dead, just as he was reproaching his wife for her affection for Auposoi, and boasting of the vengeance he had taken. The little fellow ran into the woods and hid. Little Shell found the old woman, Auposoi's mother, in her tent; he instantly stabbed her. Onda-inoiache then came in, took the knife, and gave her a second stab. Little Shell, in his turn, taking the knife, gave a third blow. In this manner did these two rascals continue to murder the old woman as long as there was any life in her. The boy escaped into Langlois' house, and was kept hid until they were all sober."

March 15, a swan, a turkey-buzzard, and a hawk, the first spring birds, were seen; and by the middle of April wild-fowl were plenty, and calves were becoming numerous. Passenger pigeons were passing north, and toward the end of the month some Indians came in with thirty-six whole beaver in a skin canoe. In May came the news of a Sioux attack on the Saulteurs, in which seven of the latter were killed. Henry planted his garden, and soon after made ready for his departure to join the brigade. •

The next September he was back again at Panbian River, trading with the Indians, and, of course, handing out rum to them. His entry for February 15 contains a small temperance lecture which represented what he sometimes preached, but never practised. As he says: "The Indians totally neglected their ancient customs; and to what can this degeneration be ascribed but to their intercourse with us, particularly as they are so

unfortunate as to have a continual succession of opposition parties to teach them roguery, and to destroy both mind and body with that pernicious article rum? What a different set of people they would be were there not a drop of liquor in the country. If a murder is committed among the Saulteurs, it is due to a drinking match. You may truly say that liquor is the root of all evil in the West."

Spring came on with the usual signs. The women were making sugar at the last of March (1803), and it was noted that spring that very few buffalo drifted down the river. The plains of the Red River were covered with water from the sudden melting of the snow, and the men suffered much, for they were continually on the march, looking up Indians along every stream. The water was commonly knee-deep, and in some places much deeper, and was usually covered with ice in the morning, making the walking tiresome, and often dangerous. Some of the best men, Henry says, lose the use of their legs while still in the prime of life. The Indians were now bringing in the proceeds of their spring hunt, and exchanging it for rum. When the time came around, Henry interrupted his hunting and his trading to plant his garden, sowing potatoes, cabbage, and many root crops. With the end of May came the mosquitoes, a terrible pest. Among the articles traded for was maple sugar, an important article of food in that country. As usual, about midsummer, Henry started down the river with his furs, and reached Fort William July 3.



On the 29th of the same month he started on his return journey, with a brigade of eight canoes; and about two months later, September 20, found himself at the present Winnipeg, and soon afterward at the old post on the Panbian River.

Horses had now begun to be used in the trade at this point, and Henry grumbles about them in a long entry, which is worth reproducing: "It is true they are useful animals, but if there were not one in all the Northwest we should have less trouble and expense. Our men would neither be so burdened with families, nor so indolent and insolent as they are, and the natives in general would be more honest and industrious. Let an impartial eye look into the affair, to discover whence originates the unbounded extravagance of our meadow gentry, both white and native, and horses will be found one of the principal causes. Let us view the bustle and noise which attended the transportation of five pieces of goods to a place where the houses were built in 1801-02. The men were up at break of day, and their horses tackled long before sunrise; but they were not ready to move before ten o'clock, when I had the curiosity to climb on top of my house to watch their motions, and observe their order of march.

"Antoine Payet, guide and second in command, leads the van with a cart drawn by two horses, and loaded with private baggage, cassettes, bags, kettles, and mash-queminctes. Madame Payet follows the cart, with a child a year old on her back, very merry. Charles Bottineau, with two horses and a cart, loaded with 1½

packs, his own baggage, and two young children, with kettles and other trash hanging on to it. Madame Bottineau, with a squalling infant on her back, scolding and tossing it about. Joseph Dubord goes on foot, with his long pipestem and calumet in his hand. Madame Dubord follows on foot, carrying his tobacco pouch with a broad bead tail. Antoine Thellier, with a cart and two horses, loaded with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  packs of goods, and Dubois' baggage. Antoine La Pointe, with another cart and horses, loaded with two pieces of goods, and with baggage belonging to Brisebois, Jasmin, and Pouliot, and a kettle hung on each side. Auguste Brisebois follows, with only his gun on his shoulder and a fresh-lighted pipe in his mouth. Michel Jasmin goes next, like Brisebois, with gun and pipe, puffing out clouds of smoke. Nicolas Pouliot, the greatest smoker in the Northwest, has nothing but pipe and pouch; those three fellows have taken a farewell dram, and lighted fresh pipes, go on brisk and merry, playing numerous pranks. Dormin Livernois, with a young mare, the property of Mr. Langlois, loaded with weeds for smoking, an old worsted bag (madame's property), some squashes and potatoes, a small keg of fresh water, and two young whelps, howling. Next goes Livernois' young horse, drawing a *travaille*, loaded with baggage and a large worsted mashguemcate, belonging to Madame Langlois. Next appears Madame Cameron's mare, kicking, rearing, and snorting, hauling a *travaille* loaded with a bag of flour, cabbage, turnips, onions, a small keg of water, and a large kettle of broth. Michel Langlois, who is

master of the band, now comes on leading a horse that draws a *travaille* nicely covered with a new painted tent, under which his daughter and Mrs. Cameron lie at full length, very sick; this covering or canopy has a pretty effect in the caravan, and appears at a great distance in the plains. Madame Langlois brings up the rear of the human beings, following the *travaille* with a slow step and melancholy air, attending to the wants of her daughter, who, notwithstanding her sickness, can find no other expressions of gratitude to her parents than by calling them dogs, fools, beasts, etc. The rear-guard consists of a long train of twenty dogs, some for sleighs, some for game, and others for no use whatever, except to snarl and destroy meat. The total forms a procession nearly a mile long, and appears like a large band of Assiniboines."

Early in November Henry went over to the Hair Hills. In March, on a journey from the Hair Hills to his home, he says that he travelled in the night always, preferring to do so at this season of the year, partly to avoid snow blindness, and partly because the cold of the night makes travel easier than during the day, when the snow is melted and soft, and dogs and sledges sink deep into it. In April, when he was chasing buffalo, he came near leaving his bones in the plains, a prey for the wolves. "This was occasioned by my horse stumbling while at full speed. I was just drawing my gun from the belt to fire, holding it by the barrel, near the muzzle, when the sudden shock caused the priming to fire the gun; the ball passed near my hip and struck in

the ground, and the gun flew some distance. I was in the midst of the herd; a fine large calf passing near me, I dismounted, caught him by the tail, and held him fast; he began to bleat, when instantly the mother turned and rushed at me; I was glad to let go and run to my horse. As I reflected on my narrow escape, it brought to my mind a similar affair which happened to me some years ago at Michipicoten, when shooting wildfowl in the spring, in a small canoe. In attempting to remove my gun from my left to my right side, passing the muzzle behind my back, the cock got fast in one of the bars, and, on my pulling the gun forward from behind me, she went off; the load grazed my right side, taking a piece of my belt and capot away."

In April he bought a beautiful white buffalo skin; the hair was long, soft and perfectly white, resembling a sheep's fleece. Early in May extraordinary numbers of wild pigeons were seen, and the Indian women were preparing the ground for their farming. With the summer came the usual packing of the furs, and the journey to Kamanistiquia. The return journey was a short one, and Henry reached the Panbian River early in September. In October he writes, as showing the excellence of his horse, that one day he ran an elk five miles before killing it; then chased a hare, which he killed after a long pursuit; and finally, toward evening, he ran a herd of buffalo, and killed a fat cow for supper. Besides these long races, he had covered about thirty-six miles of travel.

This winter, because he refused to give credit to an

Indian for a blanket, Henry was twice shot at, but missed. On his return to his post that summer, he learned of an attack on a small camp of his Indians by Sioux a month earlier. This is the story as Henry gives it, and it may be retold because it illustrates Indian modes: "My beau-père (father-in-law) was the first man that fell, about eight o'clock in the morning. He had climbed a tree to see if the buffalo were at hand, as they were tented there to make dried provisions. He had no sooner reached the top than two Sioux discoverers [scouts] fired at the same moment, and both balls passed through his body. He had only time to call out to his family, who were in the tent, about a hundred paces from him, 'Save yourselves, the Sioux are killing us!' and fell dead to the ground, his body breaking several branches of the tree as it dropped. The noise brought the Indians out of the tent, when, perceiving their danger, the women and children instantly ran through the plains toward an island of wood on Tongue River, about a mile distant, and on a direct line toward the fort. The men took their arms and made off also, keeping in the rear of their women and children, whom they urged on. The four surviving men had not gone more than a quarter of a mile when they saw the main body of the war party, on horseback, rushing down upon them. Crossing Tongue River, and in a few moments coming up with them, the Sioux began to fire. The four men, by expert maneuvers and incessant fire, prevented the enemy from closing in on them, while the women and children continued to fly, and the men followed.

They were within about two hundred paces of the wood, and some of the most active had actually entered it, when the enemy surrounded and fell upon them. Three of the Saulteurs fled in different directions; Grand Gueule escaped before they were completely surrounded, but the other two were killed. One who remained to protect the women and children was a brave fellow—Aceguemanche, or Little Chief; he waited deliberately until the enemy came very near, when he fired at one who appeared to be a chief, and knocked the Sioux from his horse. Three young girls and a boy were taken prisoners; the remainder were all murdered and mutilated in a horrible manner. Several women and children had escaped in the woods, where the enemy chased them on horseback, but the willows and brush were so intricate that every one of these escaped. A boy about twelve years old, when the Sioux pursued, crawled into a hollow under a bunch of willows, which a horseman leaped over without perceiving him. One of the little girls who escaped tells a pitiful story of her mother, who was killed. This woman, having two young children that could not walk fast enough, had taken one of them on her back and prevailed upon her sister-in-law to carry the other; but when they got near the woods, and the enemy rushed upon them with hideous yells and war-whoops, the young woman was so frightened that she threw down the child and soon overtook the mother, who, observing that the child was missing, and hearing its screams, kissed her little daughter—the one who relates the story—saying, with tears streaming



from her eyes: 'Take courage, my daughter; try to reach the woods, and if you do, go to your eldest sister, who will be kind to you; I must turn back and recover your youngest sister, or die in the attempt. Take courage; run fast, my daughter!' Poor woman! She actually did recover her child, and was running off with both children, when she was felled to the ground by a blow on the head with a war-club. She recovered instantly, drew her knife, and plunged it into the neck of her murderer; but others coming up, she was despatched. Thus my belle-mère ended her days."

This same story is told by Tanner, who was then an Indian captive, living with the Chippewas. Tanner even mentions Henry's name, and speaks of his father-in-law having been killed. The Saulteurs were determined to avenge the death of their relations, and Henry furnished them with ammunition for their war journey. Later, he visited the battle-field and the Sioux camp, and judged from the sign that there must have been about three hundred men in the Sioux party. In October the remains of the Sioux killed by Little Chief were discovered by some of the Indians; and the certainty that their enemies had met one loss was some satisfaction to the Saulteurs.

Although Henry had made an agreement with Mr. Miller, an agent of the Hudson's Bay Company, by which the rum to be given to the Indians should be limited, the winter did not pass without deaths due to drinking. One of these was an accident where a drunken Indian knocked down a gun which, exploding, killed





FUR TRADERS OF THE NORTH.



one of Henry's men, who was lying on a bed in the next room. The profits for the season's work in 1805 and 1806, as given in Henry's diary, are nearly three thousand five hundred pounds.

Early in July, 1806, after his return from down the river, Henry made preparations to set off on a tour to the south-west, to the country of the Mandans, who then, as now, lived on the Missouri River. There had been heavy rains, and the plains of the Red River were covered with water, or else were so muddy that travel was slow and exceedingly laborious. The horses often sank up to their knees in mud, and at times had water up to their bellies, while the little rivulets which they crossed they were obliged to swim, carrying on their heads such articles as they wished to keep dry. Mosquitoes were a veritable plague, and Henry had prepared a mask of thin dressed caribou skin, which in some measure protected him; but those who were not provided with some defense suffered terribly. Only when the wind blew was there any relief. They were more than once obliged to make rafts, and when they were naked, hauling the raft back and forth, they had no defense against the mosquitoes. The horses suffered as much as the men.

The final start for the Mandans was from the establishment on Mouse River, and the party consisted of seven persons, of whom one was a Saulteur, a brother-in-law of Chaboillez, who had undertaken to guide the party to the Mandans. It was midsummer, and they travelled west-southwest over delightful prairies, where antelope were exceedingly abundant. After crossing

Mouse River, they found buffalo in great plenty, and all in motion, from east to west. It was the rutting season, and the herds were noisy and excited. On the 18th of July, as they were crossing the high Missouri plains, they came in sight of the buttes, called *Maison du Chien*, now commonly known as the Dogden Buttes. This is one of the great landmarks of the country, and many stirring adventures have taken place within sight of it. A little later they could see the high red banks of the Missouri before them, a long way off.

When they reached it, they found plenty of tracks of people there, and an abundance of last year's corncobs. The winter village of the Minitaris was near. A well-defined trail led down the river, and they were several times in danger of breaking their necks in deep pits, which the natives had dug in the path to catch wolves and foxes in winter. Some of these were ten feet deep, and hollowed out in places to about thirty feet in circumference, while the entrance was no wider than a foot-path, and about five feet in length. "These holes are covered with dried grass, at the season when the wolves are caught, and every morning are found to contain some of those animals. In summer the grass grows strong and high about the mouths, entirely concealing them until one arrives upon the very brink, and he is in danger of tumbling in headlong." Down the river about five miles they came to a Mandan village. The people received them pleasantly, and the Black Cat, the chief, took them to one of his houses, which was kept for strangers. The people were desirous

of trading, and could not understand why the white men should have come so far out of mere curiosity. As usual in these permanent villages of earth lodges, the horses at night were confined in one part of the lodge while the people slept in the other. The Mandans had large earthen pots of different sizes, from five gallons to one quart, used solely for boiling corn and beans. The Black Cat was told the next day by a Canadian who lived in the neighboring Mandan village, who his visitors were, and at once brought out the American flag, given him in the autumn of 1804 by Captains Lewis and Clark, and hoisted it over the hut in which the strangers were staying. When they were about to cross the river and go to the opposite village, they packed up such goods as they had, and the few things they had purchased, chiefly provisions, and gave them into the care of the chief. "These people are much given to thieving, but in the hut in which a stranger is lodged his property may be left in perfect security; none dare touch it, as the master conceives his honor concerned in whatever is placed under his immediate protection. Out of doors, if they can pick your pocket or pilfer any article, it is gone in an instant, and search would be in vain; every one would wish to appear innocent, although they are not offended when accused of stealing, but laugh the matter away."

Henry and his people crossed the river in bull-boats, and were well received at the other Mandan village. He noted the expertness of the young men in getting the horses across, one swimming ahead with the rope

in his teeth, while others swam on each side, and in the rear, driving each horse very rapidly. He also saw bull-boats—a new vessel to him. They had hardly reached the village when there came in some Pawnees from down the river on an embassy to treat for peace. They could not speak the language either of the Mandans or the Minitaris, but they talked freely in signs; and this sign language seems to have been a surprise to Henry. He says: "They hold conversations for several hours upon different subjects, during the whole of which time not a single word is pronounced upon either side, and still they appear to comprehend each other perfectly well. This mode of communication is natural to them. Their gestures are made with the greatest ease, and they never seem to be at a loss for a sign to express their meaning."

These people collected their fuel in the spring, when the ice broke up, and great quantities of wood drifted down. The young men were accustomed to swim out among the drifting ice and bring in the trees, however large, which they hauled out on the bank. Immense piles of driftwood were seen opposite each village, and some of the trees were very large. While collecting this driftwood, they also drew to land great numbers of drowned buffalo, of which they were very fond.

He noticed—as have many others—that some children were gray-haired, and that others were blond. A Minitari was seen with yellow hair, something not unexampled in old times.

The men wore their hair twisted into a number of

small tails, hanging down the back to below the waist. In some of them it trailed on the ground. The Cheyennes to-day tell us that a hundred years ago the men of their tribe wore their hair in the same fashion. From the village of the Mandans they went on up the river to those of the Soulier [Amahami, a tribe now extinct] and Minitari villages. Here they met Mackenzie and Caldwell, employees in the service of the Northwest Company, who had been residing some little time in the village.

Henry was not particularly well pleased with his reception here, and indeed the Indians paid little attention to the white men, and seemed to despise them. The village, which formerly contained nine hundred houses, now had only a hundred and thirty, smallpox and other diseases having reduced them to that number. While in this village the white men found it dangerous to stray out of the hut without a stout stick to keep off the dogs, which were so numerous and savage as sometimes actually to attack them. The people had many horses. Henry greatly objected to their custom of apparently becoming dissatisfied with their bargain after a trade had been concluded, and returning and taking back the article they had sold, while giving up the price paid for it. For example: "One of the natives had a turkey cock's tail, great numbers of which they got from the Schians, and which serve them as fans; this was a new and fresh one of beautiful hue. I gave him five rounds of ammunition for it, with which he appeared well satisfied, and left me, but soon returned with the ammuni-



tion, and demanded the tail. Being loth to part with it, I added five more rounds to the price, which he accepted and went away. However, he soon reappeared and I added four more; but to no purpose, for he continued to go and come until the payment amounted to thirty rounds. Upon his next appearance I offered forty rounds; but he would no longer listen to any offer, threw down my ammunition, and insisted upon my returning him the tail, which I was obliged to do."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ALEXANDER HENRY (THE YOUNGER)

#### III

ON July 28 they started on their return to the north, in constant fears and alarms lest the Assiniboines should steal their horses. A few days later the horses, troubled by mosquitoes, broke their ropes, and eight of them ran off in their hobbles. These could not be found again, and some of the people were obliged to go forward on foot, while the baggage was loaded on the remaining horses.

On his journey back to the Pembina River, Henry had an experience comical to read about, but not to endure. "We took the traverse for the mountain, but on coming to Cypress River found it had overflowed its banks about three acres on each side, and could find no fordable place. We were obliged to turn out of our way some miles, in going to where we perceived a large, dry poplar tree, and a few stunted willows, but there we had the mortification to find that the wood stood on the opposite side of the river. There being no alternative, we unloaded our horses and stripped. I crossed over, collected what brush I could find, and with the poplar

formed a raft, so very slight as to carry scarcely more than fifty pounds' weight. The mosquitoes were intolerable, and as we were obliged to remain naked for about four hours, we suffered more than I can describe. The grass on each side was too high to haul our raft through to dry land; we could use it only on the river by means of two long cords, one fastened to each end. Ducharme hauled it over to his side, and after making it fast, he went to dry land for a load in water up to his armpits, whilst I waited with my whole body immersed until he brought down a load and laid it upon the raft. I then hauled it over and carried the load to dry land upon my head. Every time I landed the mosquitoes plagued me insufferably; and still worse, the horse that I had crossed over upon was so tormented that he broke his fetters and ran away. I was under the cruel necessity of pursuing him on the plains entirely naked; fortunately I caught him and brought him back. I suffered a good deal from the sharp-pointed grass pricking my bare feet, and mosquito bites covered my body. The sun was set before we finished our transportation. The water in this river is always excessively cold, and by the time we got all over, our bodies were as blue as indigo; we were shivering like aspen leaves, and our legs were cut and chafed by the coarse, stiff grass. We shot an old swan, and caught two young ones that could not fly; this made us a comfortable supper."

Henry reached the fort August 14.

"One of our hunters killed thirty-six prime bears in the course of the season on the Hair Hills. Whatever

number of bears an Indian may kill in the summer or fall is considered of no consequence, as they are valueless and easy to hunt, but after they have taken up their winter quarters the Indians glory in killing them."

In August, 1808, Henry finally left the Panbian River on his way westward, bidding adieu also to the Saulteur tribes, among which, as he says, he had passed sixteen long winters. His journey was through Lake Winnipeg to the Saskatchewan and Lake Bourbon, now known as Cedar Lake. On the 22nd he passed old Fort Bourbon, established in 1749 by Verendrye, and entered one of the channels of the Saskatchewan. Wild-fowl were very abundant as they pushed up the river. At last they entered Sturgeon Lake, and reached Cumberland House. They kept on up the stream, ascending the north branch, from time to time meeting Indians, some of whom were Assiniboines, called Assiniboines of the Saskatchewan, and as they had before this purchased some horses, they were fearful that these might be stolen. It was now September, and the bushes were loaded with chokecherries and service berries. Buffalo paths running in every direction were deep and numerous. Ammunition was issued early in September to the men for purposes of defense. Soon buffalo were met, and here Henry first ran these animals over the rough ground of the plains, covered with large round stones, and pierced at frequent intervals with badger holes. On September 13 he reached Fort Vermilion, where was a fort of the Hudson's Bay Company, and found the Blackfeet all

about. Here Henry wintered, expecting to be visited by numerous tribes from the south.

Just before Christmas, in December, the Blackfeet invited Henry and his Hudson's Bay neighbor to come to their camp and see buffalo driven into the pound. The two men went in dog sledges, and were kindly received by the Indians, but the weather was insufferable, being foggy, and the wind was contrary. They viewed the pound, where they "had only the satisfaction of viewing the mangled carcasses strewn about the pound. The bulls were mostly entire, none but good cows having been cut up. The stench from this inclosure was great, even at this season, for the weather was mild." From the lookout hill, buffalo were seen in enormous numbers, but as the wind was unfavorable, every herd that was brought near to the pound dispersed and ran away. After having been there two days, Henry became disgusted, and returned to the post; but he was followed by a number of Blackfeet, who arrived the next day, and told him that they had scarcely left when a large herd was brought into the pound.

On the 26th of September, 1810, Henry set off on horseback, westward; the canoes, of course, coming up the stream. Their destination was Rocky Mountain House, a post located on the north Saskatchewan River, a mile and a half above the mouth of Clearwater, three miles below Pangman's Tree, so named from the fact that Peter Pangman carved an inscription on it when he first sighted the mountains in 1790.

On the way up the stream they found signs of beaver

extremely abundant; but although one of the Indians set traps in the hope of taking some, the winds blew the smoke of the camp toward the traps, and the beaver did not leave their houses that night. The next day, however, they took two, the signs still showing the presence of great quantities of beaver. Ahead of Henry was a camp of Sarsi, twenty-five lodges, which had just left, for at their camp on Medicine Lodge River, a branch of the Red Deer; the fires were still burning. They must have made a good hunt here, since the bones of beaver, bear, moose, elk and buffalo lay about their camp in great quantities. That afternoon they met five lodges of Bloods and Sarsi, with whom they camped. Game was abundant, and Henry notes on the 5th the appearance of a herd of strongwood buffalo, the bison of the hills and mountains, so different in appearance and some of their habits from those of the prairie. Here, too, were seen the fresh tracks of a grizzly bear, measuring fourteen inches in length.

When they reached the fort they found the Piegons friendly and quiet, but suspicious of the whites. "These Piegons had the fresh hide of a bull they had killed at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. This was really a curiosity; the hair on the back was dirty white, and the long hair under the throat and forelegs iron-gray, and sides and belly were yellow. I wished to purchase it, but the owners would not part with it under any consideration." It is well understood that white buffalo, or those that are spotted, or indeed of any unusual color, are very highly esteemed by the tribes of the plains.

Henry has referred to this before, and I have called attention to the sacredness of the white buffalo's hide among the Blackfeet, Bloods, and Piegans, and among the Cheyennes further to the south.

It was now an active time, Bloods, Piegans, and Sarsi coming and going, bringing in some beaver, for which they received tobacco, rum, and trifles, and occasionally a gift of clothing to some man who had brought in an especially good lot of beaver. On November 4 the traders had in store 720 beaver, 33 grizzly bears, 20 buffalo robes, 300 muskrats, 100 lynx—not a bad trade for the season of the year.

November 9: "I rode up river about three miles to the rising ground on the north side, where Mr. Pangman carved his name on the pine in 1790. This spot was the utmost distant of discoveries on the Saskatchewan toward the Rocky Mountains, of which, indeed, we had a tolerable view from this hill. The winding course of the river is seen until it enters the gap of the mountains, a little east of which appears another gap, through which, I am told, flows a south branch that empties into the Saskatchewan some miles above this place. The mountains appear at no great distance, all covered with snow; while we have none." The arrival this day of an express from below brought the news that an act of Parliament had been passed prohibiting the sale of spirituous liquors among the Indians.

The weather was now cold, the river occasionally choking up with ice, and snow fell. The canoes were split by the frost, and axes broke while the men were



chopping with them. Men were sent out to get dogs for hauling, and as soon as the country became covered with snow, dog trains were sent down to lower Terre Blanche to bring up goods. Gros Ventres of the Prairie had just returned with sixty horses, stolen from the Flatheads, and others had gone off to try to take more. On the 27th of December, "Our hunter had killed a large grizzly bear, very lean, and, as usual with them in that state, very wicked; he narrowly escaped being devoured. They seldom den for the winter, as black bears do, but wander about in search of prey."

In February Henry made a trip to the Continental Divide, to where the waters of a branch of the Columbia rise within a very short distance of the Saskatchewan. He was obliged to tell the Piegans that he was going down the stream instead of up. Travel was by dog sledge, and over the frozen river, in which there were no air holes to be seen. On the way up, during the first day, they found a carcass of a deer that had been killed by wolves. The ice was of great thickness, so that at night, when a man was endeavoring to get water from the stream, he was obliged to cut with an axe for an hour before it flowed. As they went up the stream, the banks grew higher and nearer together, and at one point there were seen tracks of animals coming down the mountains among the rocks. "These are the gray sheep which have been seen about this place, and which delight to dwell among precipices and caverns, where they feed on a peculiar sort of clay." The reference is evidently to a "lick," a place where a mineral spring has

given a saline taste to the earth round about. Such licks are common enough in the Rocky Mountains and many other places, and are regularly visited by sheep, which often gnaw away the earth in many places and over a considerable space. A little further up the stream they were in full view of the mountains. The river being low, flowed through numerous channels, some of which were free from ice; others which were frozen, had water flowing over the ice. On account of the wind there was little snow on the gravel bars, and the hauling was hard for the dogs and bad for the sleds.

On the 5th he overtook his people, who had started several days earlier, and who had killed three sheep and three cows. Here Henry stopped for a day, and sent off three men to hunt sheep, wishing to obtain the entire skin of an old ram. This they failed to secure, but one of them had seen the tracks of a white goat. The next day, keeping on, sheep tracks were seen, and Henry indulges in reflections on the wonderful places which they passed over, and their sureness of foot. The following day, "Shortly after leaving camp, we saw a herd of about thirty rams feeding among the rocks on the north side. They did not seem to be shy, though the noise of our bells and dogs was sufficient to have alarmed a herd of buffalo two miles off. The rams stood for some time gazing at us, and did not retreat until some people with dogs climbed up to fire at them, when they set off at full speed, directing their course up the mountain. I was astonished to see with what agility they scaled the cliffs and crags. At one time I supposed

them hemmed in by rocks so steep and smooth that it seemed impossible for any animal to escape being dashed to pieces below, but the whole herd passed this place on a narrow horizontal ledge, without a single misstep, and were soon out of sight." Here Henry seems to have seen his first flock of dippers, which interested him not a little; and on the ice above this point he found the remains of a ram which had been run down by wolves and devoured.

There were plenty of buffalo on Kutenai Plains, which they now reached, but they killed none, a hunter firing at a sheep having driven them off. Moose and elk were plenty here, as well as white-tailed deer and grizzly bears; and here, too, were seen "white partridges"—in other words, white-tailed ptarmigan. Still following up the river, the snow grew deeper and deeper, so that at length they were obliged to take to snow-shoes, and to beat a path for their dogs. On the 9th of February they reached the Continental Divide, and passing through thick forest came to a small opening where three streams of Columbian waters join. The brook thus formed is Blueberry Creek, which runs into the Columbia. That morning, when leaving camp, in the Kutenai Park, a place where the Kutenais used to drive buffalo over the cliff, Henry had left his hunter, Desjarlaix, behind, telling him to try to kill a white goat. Shortly after his return to the camp, his hunter came in and told Henry that he had seen large white goats on the mountain, directly off Kutenai Park, where he had been trying since daybreak to get a shot at them. "He was almost

exhausted, the snow being up to his middle, and the ground so steep as not to admit of snow-shoes. He had worked about a quarter of the way up the mountain, but had been obliged to abandon the attempt to reach the animals. They did not appear the least shy, but stood gazing at him, and cropping the stunted shrubs and blades of long grass which grew in crevices in places where the wind had blown the snow off. As I desired to obtain the skin of one of those animals, I gave him dry mittens and trousers to put on, went with him to the foot of the mountain, and I pointed out a place where I supposed it was possible to reach them. We could perceive all three, still standing abreast on the edge of a precipice, looking down upon us, but they were at a great height. He once more undertook the arduous task of climbing up in pursuit of them, while I returned to the camp. A hunter in these mountains requires many pairs of shoes (i. e., moccasins), the rocks are so rough and sharp that a pair of good strong moose-leather shoes are soon torn to pieces. The white goat is [not] larger than the gray sheep, thickly covered with long, pure white wool, and has short black, nearly erect horns. These animals seldom leave the mountain tops; winter or summer they prefer the highest regions. Late in the evening my hunter returned, exhausted, and covered with ice, having labored in the snow till his clothes became all wet, and soon after stiff with ice. He had ascended half way when the sun set, which obliged him to return."

The next day Henry wished to send his hunter out

again, but the poor fellow was so done up and his legs so swollen by the exercise of the day before that the effort was given up. They therefore started down the river, past the camp of the day before, where they found that the men had killed sheep, buffalo, a large black wolf, and a Canada lynx. The following day they saw a herd of rams on the rocks, and tried to get a shot, "but one of our men, being some distance ahead, and not observing them, continued to drive on, which alarmed and drove them up into the mountains. I regretted this very much as the herd consisted of old rams with enormous horns; one of them appeared to be very lean, with extraordinarily heavy horns, whose weight he seemed scarcely able to support. When the horns grow to such great length, forming a complete curve, the ends project on both sides of the head so as to prevent the animal from feeding, which, with their great weight, causes the sheep to dwindle to a mere skeleton and die. We soon afterward saw a herd of buffalo on the hills near the river, but on hearing the sound of the bells they ran away, and appeared much more shy than sheep." Continuing down the river, they reached the fort, February 13.

Henry finished the winter at Rocky Mountain House, and in May, 1811, started down the river to Fort Augustus.

There is now a long break, extending over two years, in Henry's journal, the third part, as Dr. Coues has divided it, being devoted to the Columbia. November 15, 1813, finds him at Astoria, the scene of so many

trials of fur traders, and the place about which so many books have been written. The journal for the two intervening years has not been discovered. It may yet turn up and, if it shall, will undoubtedly give us much interesting information. What we know is that Henry came to Astoria from Fort William, but how he got there we do not know. His party came, however, in bark canoes, for a contemporary writer says as much as that. Not only was Henry here on the west coast, but his nephew, William Henry, who had been frequently associated with him in past years, even back on the Pembina River.

The character of the Indians here interested Henry, and he makes his usual frank and not always elegant comments on them. On November 30 the British ship "Raccoon" reached Astoria, captured the place, and thereafter it was a British trading-post, under the name Fort George. Duncan McDougal, the chief factor, had left the Northwest Company to enter Mr. Astor's service, in 1810, but without any particular hesitation he surrendered to the British ship, although the Indians were only too anxious to defend the place for the Americans, and to assist the white men in holding it. As a matter of fact, however, most of the employees of Mr. Astor were British subjects, and were very glad to have the place taken.

Much time was expended on the final settlement of the accounts between McDougal, who had been Mr. Astor's representative at Astoria, and the representatives of the Northwest Company, who were now in possession;



but at last this was all finished, and on December 31 the "Raccoon" made sail, and disappeared behind Point Adams.

Rains were constant, and the fur traders and their property suffered much from wet and dampness. With this spring, Henry for the first time seems to have seen the Indians catching smelts and herrings, and describes the well-known rake used on the western coast: "They had a pole about ten feet long and two inches thick, on one side of which was fixed a range of small sharp bones, like teeth, about one inch long, a quarter of an inch asunder, the range of teeth ascending six feet up the blade. This instrument is used in smelt fishery." As is well known, the Indians sweep this instrument through the water in places where the small fish are schooled, and at each sweep of the rake from one to half dozen fish are impaled, when the implement being brought to the surface and held over the canoe, the fish are jarred from it into the vessel. On the 28th of February a ship, the "Pedler," brought Mr. Hunt, who was second to Mr. Astor in the management of the Pacific Fur Company, and headed the original overland Astor expedition in 1810-1812.

There was now a gathering of all the partners and those interested in the Northwest Company and the Pacific Fur Company for a settling of accounts between Hunt and McDougal. The "Pedler" got under way April 2. On April 4 a brigade of ten canoes set off up the river. This left a small contingent at Fort George, and this contingent very ill provided. They had a little spoiled California beef and a little bad grease. In



addition they had only the smelts caught by the Indians and these were often spoiled, so that the men refused to eat them, and the little provision that they could buy from the Indians, a few beaver, deer, and elk—called *biche* by Henry. As a result many of the men were ill, and fourteen were in hospital at one time. To help out the lack of sugar or molasses, they experimented in making a decoction of camas root, which produces a kind of syrup, preferable to molasses for sweetening coffee. Among the skins brought in by the Indians were occasionally those of tame cats, which Henry conjectures to be the offspring of cats lost from Spanish ships that had been cast ashore.

April 22 a ship was seen, which proved to be the "Isaac Todd," on which came Mr. J. C. McTavish, who was to take charge of Fort George as governor. Work went on; loading and unloading the ship, buying provisions, the annoyances of small quarrels between various people. The entry in Henry's diary of May 21, 1814, is partly finished, and then ends with a dash; for on Sunday, May 22, Alexander Henry, Donald McTavish, and five sailors were drowned while going out to the ship.

So perished Alexander Henry, the younger, after twenty-two years of adventure, extending from the Great Lakes to the Pacific, and from the Missouri River north to Lake Athabasca. It may fairly be said of all the books that have been written by the early travellers and traders in America this is the most interesting and the most curious.

## CHAPTER XIX

### ROSS COX

#### I

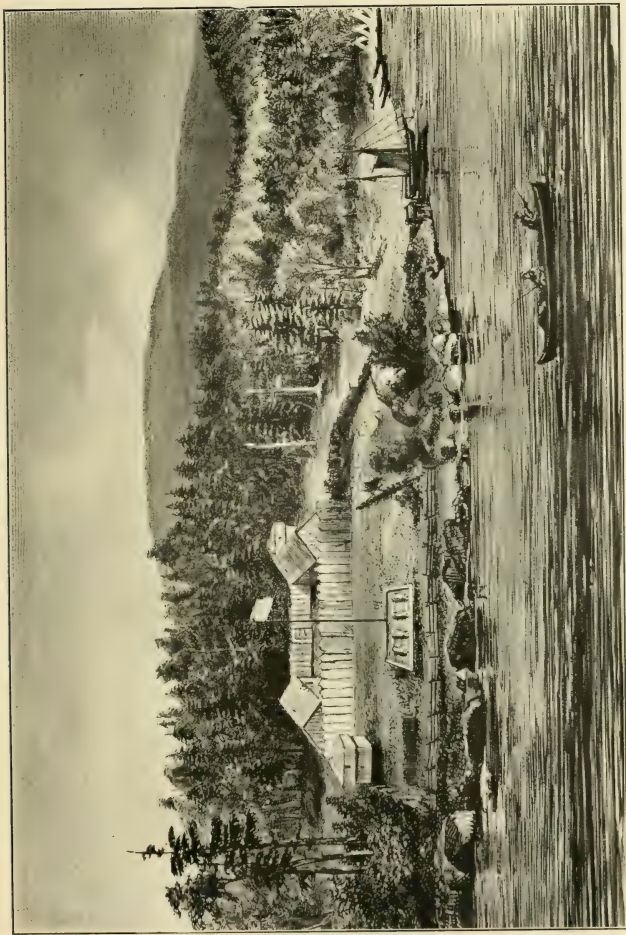
ON the 17th of October, 1811, the ship "Beaver," Captain Cornelius Sowles, sailed from New York for the mouth of the Columbia River. She carried one partner, six clerks, and a number of artisans and voyageurs, of the Pacific Fur Company, an association of which John Jacob Astor was the chief proprietor. Among the clerks on this ship was Ross Cox, who, some years later, published a work in two volumes, called *The Columbia River, or Scenes and Adventures During a Residence of Six Years on the Western Side of the Rocky Mountains among Various Tribes of Indians Hitherto Unknown, Together with a Journey Across the American Continent*.

Cox was a British subject, but, like many of his compatriots, was eager to secure an appointment in Mr. Astor's company, for he was captivated by the love of novelty, and by the hope of speedily realizing an independence in the new country that was being opened.

It will be remembered that, for about a hundred years after its charter had been granted, the Hudson's

Bay Company made little effort to extend into the interior the trading-posts which it, alone, had the privilege of establishing on the shores of the Hudson's Bay and its tributary rivers. True, trading-posts had been established in the interior, but chiefly by the French traders, who had practically possessed the country until the close of the French and Indian War. Then came the founding of the Northwest Fur Company of Canada, before long a formidable rival to the Hudson's Bay Company. It was conducted on the wiser plan of giving each one of its employees the chance to rise and become a partner, provided only his success justified the promotion. The Hudson's Bay Company, on the other hand, hired its men and paid them regularly, but offered no inducements to extra exertion on the part of its officers. The result could not be doubtful; the new company pressed the old one hard; and consolidation at length took place between the two.

In the early part of the last century, John Jacob Astor, whose fur trade with the interior had not been altogether satisfactory, determined to explore the northwest coast, and proposed to the Northwest Company to join him in establishing a trading-post on the Columbia River. The proposition was declined. Nevertheless, in 1809, Astor formed the Pacific Fur Company, and needing able and experienced traders, he induced a number of men connected with the Northwest Company to leave that establishment and join him. Among these were Alexander M'Kay, who had been a companion of Sir Alexander Mackenzie in earlier days.



ASTORIA IN 1813.

From Franchère's *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*.



Astor's plan was to establish posts on the north-west coast, to which each year a vessel should carry goods for the Indian trade, and having discharged her cargo at the mouth of the Columbia River, should take on board the furs of the year's trade, and thence proceed to China; selling her furs there, she should load with the products of that country and return to New York.

The first vessel fitted out by the Pacific Fur Company was the ill-fated "Tonquin," commanded by Captain Jonathan Thorn. She sailed from New York in 1810, with a number of partners, clerks, and artisans, and with a large cargo of goods for the Indian trade; and about the same time a party under W. P. Hunt and Donald Mackenzie left St. Louis to cross the continent to the mouth of the Columbia.

The "Beaver" was the next of these annual ships to sail. She rounded the Horn, and touched at the Sandwich Islands, where a number of the natives were shipped as laborers for the post, and on the 8th of May the ship's company found themselves opposite the mouth of the Columbia River. They crossed the bar without accident and, after a voyage of six months and twenty-two days, cast anchor in Baker's Bay.

The accounts which they received from their friends at Astoria were very discouraging. There had been frequent quarrels between the captain of the "Tonquin" and his passengers. The captain was a man of great daring, but harsh and arbitrary in manner, and very ready to quarrel with his British passengers. His obstinacy resulted in the loss of several men at the mouth

of the Columbia; and the chief mate of the vessel, in consequence of a dispute with the captain, left her, and obtained an assignment to command a little schooner built by the company. The "Tonquin," with M'Kay and Lewis, one of the clerks on board, dropped down to the mouth of the Columbia and proceeded northward, to go as far as Cooke's River, on a trading excursion.

In the meantime, the overland parties, under the command of Mackenzie, M'Lellan, Hunt, and Crooks, after great suffering, reached the fort.

The fate of the "Tonquin" was learned in the month of August, 1811, from a party of Indians from Gray's Harbor. They came to the Columbia for fishing, and told the Chinooks that the "Tonquin" had been cut off by one of the northern tribes, and every soul massacred. This is what seems to have happened. The "Tonquin," somewhere in the neighborhood of Nootka, cast anchor, and M'Kay began to trade with the natives, who were perfectly willing to part with their furs. One of the principal men, however, having been detected in some small theft, was struck by the captain, and in revenge the Indians formed a conspiracy to take possession of the vessel. The interpreter learned of this, and told M'Kay, who warned the captain of the intended attack; but he only laughed at the information, and made no preparations for it. The Indians continued to visit the ship, and without arms. The day before the vessel was to leave, two large canoes, each containing about twenty men, appeared alongside. They had some furs in their canoes and were allowed



to come on board. Soon three more canoes followed; and the officers of the watch, seeing that a number of others were leaving the shore, warned Captain Thorn of the circumstances. He immediately came on the quarter-deck, accompanied by Mr. M'Kay and the interpreter. The latter, on observing that they all wore short cloaks or mantles of skin, which was by no means a general custom, at once knew their designs were hostile and told Mr. M'Kay of his suspicions. That gentleman immediately apprised Captain Thorn of the circumstances, and begged him to lose no time in clearing the ship of intruders. This caution was, however, treated with contempt by the captain, who remarked, that with the arms they had on board they would be more than a match for three times the number. The sailors in the meantime had all come on the deck, which was crowded with Indians, who completely blocked up the passages, and obstructed the men in the performance of their various duties. The captain requested them to retire, to which they paid no attention. He then told them he was about going to sea, and had given orders to the men to raise the anchor; that he hoped they would go away quietly; but if they refused, he should be compelled to force their departure. He had scarcely finished when, at a signal given by one of the chiefs, a loud and frightful yell was heard from the assembled savages, who commenced a sudden and simultaneous attack on the officers and crew with knives, bludgeons, and short sabres which they had concealed under their robes.

"M'Kay was one of the first attacked. One Indian gave him a severe blow with a bludgeon, which partially stunned him; upon which he was seized by five or six others, who threw him overboard into a canoe alongside, where he quickly recovered and was allowed to remain for some time uninjured.

"Captain Thorn made an ineffectual attempt to reach the cabin for his firearms, but was overpowered by numbers. His only weapon was a jack-knife, with which he killed four of his savage assailants by ripping up their bellies, and mutilated several others. Covered with wounds, and exhausted from the loss of blood, he rested himself for a moment by leaning on the tiller wheel, when he received a dreadful blow from a weapon called a pautumagan, on the back part of the head, which felled him to the deck. The death-dealing knife fell from his hand, and his savage butchers, after extinguishing the few sparks of life that still remained, threw his mangled body overboard.

"On seeing the captain's fate, our informant, who was close to him, and who had hitherto escaped uninjured, jumped into the water and was taken into a canoe by some women, who partially covered his body with mats. He states that the original intention of the enemy was to detain Mr. M'Kay a prisoner, and after securing the vessel to give him his liberty, on obtaining a ransom from Astoria. But on finding the resistance made by the captain and crew, the former of whom had killed one of their principal chiefs, their love of gain gave way to revenge, and they resolved to

destroy him. The last time the ill-fated gentleman was seen, his head was hanging over the side of a canoe, and three savages, armed with *pautumaugans*, were battering out his brains.

“In the meantime the devoted crew, who had maintained the unequal conflict with unparalleled bravery, became gradually overpowered. Three of them, John Anderson, the boatswain; John Weekes, the carpenter; [and] Stephen Weekes, who had narrowly escaped at the Columbia, succeeded after a desperate struggle in gaining possession of the cabin, the entrance to which was securely fastened inside. The Indians now became more cautious, for they well knew there were plenty of firearms below; and they had already experienced enough of the prowess of the three men while on deck, and armed only with hand-spikes, to dread approaching them while they had more mortal weapons at their command.

“Anderson and his two companions seeing their commander and the crew dead and dying about them, and that no hope of escape remained, and feeling, moreover, the uselessness of any further opposition, determined on taking a terrible revenge. Two of them, therefore, set about laying a train to the powder magazine, while the third addressed some Indians from the windows, who were in canoes, and gave them to understand that if they were permitted to depart unmolested in one of the ship’s boats they would give them quiet possession of the vessel without firing a shot; stipulating, however, that no canoe should remain near them while

getting into the boat. The anxiety of the barbarians to obtain possession of the plunder, and their disinclination to risk any more lives, induced them to embrace this proposition with eagerness, and the pinnacle was immediately brought astern. The three heroes having by this time perfected their dreadful arrangements, and ascertained that no Indian was watching them, gradually lowered themselves from the cabin windows into the boat; and having fired the train, quickly pushed off toward the mouth of the harbor, no obstacle being interposed to prevent their departure.

“Hundreds of the enemy now rushed on deck to seize the long-expected prize, shouting yells of victory; but their triumph was of short duration. Just as they had burst open the cabin door, an explosion took place, which, in an instant, hurled upward of two hundred savages into eternity, and dreadfully injured as many more. The interpreter, who had by this time reached land, states he saw many mutilated bodies floating near the beach, while heads, arms and legs, together with fragments of the ship, were thrown to a considerable distance on the shore.

“The first impression of the survivors was, that the Master of Life had sent forth the Evil Spirit from the waters to punish them for their cruelty to the white people. This belief, joined to the consternation occasioned by the shock, and the reproaches and lamentations of the wives and other relatives of the sufferers, paralyzed for a time the exertions of the savages and favored the attempt of Anderson and his brave com-

rades to escape. They rowed hard for the mouth of the harbor with the intention, as is supposed, of coasting along the shore to the Columbia; but after passing the bar, a head-wind and flowing tide drove them back and compelled them to land late at night in a small cove, where they fancied themselves free from danger, and where, weak from the loss of blood and the harassing exertions of the day, they fell into a profound sleep." Here they were captured, and a little later killed.

Such is Cox's account of the destruction of the "Tonquin," obtained, we may presume, from the interpreter. Other accounts of the same event agree with it in its main facts, though there is some question as to who it was who blew up the ship, some narrators believing that it was Stephen Weekes, while others think that it was Lewis, the clerk.

As if the spirits of the newly arrived traders had not been sufficiently damped by the story of the "Tonquin," an added misfortune followed the next day. This was the return of one of the parties that had started overland, some to trade, others to carry despatches to the east. These men had been driven back by an encounter with Indians, and after great difficulties and much suffering, reached the post again.

On the 28th of June, 1812, a party of nearly a hundred men, well supplied with trade goods, started in canoes up the Columbia. They went well prepared to meet the Indians, each man carrying a musket and forty rounds of ball cartridges, and each also wearing leathern armor, "a kind of shirt made out of the skin of the

elk, which reached from the neck to the knees. It was perfectly arrow-proof, and at eighty or ninety yards impenetrable by a musket bullet. Besides the muskets, numbers had daggers, short swords, and pistols; and when armed cap-à-pie we presented a formidable appearance." Metal armor, of course, was unknown to the Indians, but shields and body armor were common to many tribes. This was of several kinds, sometimes made of rows of overlapping plates of ivory or bone, of wood in the form of slats or rods, held in place by hide, or of coats, helmets, and so on, of hardened hide. Between 1840 and 1850 trappers on the prairie sometimes hung about their necks, to protect the front of their bodies, the hides of mule-deer dressed with the hair on. These skins, when wet, would stop an arrow. After the coming of the white men, a few suits, or portions of suits, of armor came into possession of one or more of the plains tribes, were highly valued by them, used for a long time, and gave origin to a personal name now common among the plains tribes—Iron Shirt.

At the portage every precaution was taken to guard against surprises. Five officers were stationed at each end of the portage, and several others, with twenty-five men, were scattered along it at short distances from one another. This was especially necessary at the foot of the first rapids, where the portage was three or four miles long, the path narrow and dangerous, and in some places obstructed.

The ascent of the river, over falls and rapids, was very laborious. The boats had to be dragged up part



of the way, and the labor was hard and long-continued. A little negligence by some of the men who were at the upper end of the portage resulted in a small trouble, for, while they wandered a short distance from the goods, two Indians endeavored to carry off an entire bale. It was too heavy for them, and they were about to open and carry away the contents, when two men, carrying burdens, arrived and gave the alarm. The Indians attacked the men, but the disturbance called back the officers, and the Indians fled. "A shot was fired at them by our best marksman, who was told merely to wing one, which he did with great skill, by breaking his left arm, at upward of a hundred yards distance. The fellow gave a dreadful shout on receiving the ball, but still continued his flight with his comrade, until we lost sight of them."

Keeping on up the rapids, they saw other Indians, some of whom were on horseback, and much more attractive to the eye than the canoe Indians seen farther down the river. From the fishing Indians they purchased salmon in considerable numbers.

Before this they had reached the high, volcanic, treeless country, and had found rattlesnakes; and here an odd incident happened to one of the men, named La Course, which might have been fatal. Cox says: "This man had stretched himself on the ground, after the fatigue of the day, with his head resting on a small package of goods, and quickly fell asleep. While in this situation I passed him, and was almost petrified at seeing a large rattlesnake moving from his side to his



left breast. My first impulse was to alarm La Course; but an old Canadian whom I had beckoned to the spot requested me to make no noise, alleging it would merely cross the body and go away. He was mistaken, for on reaching the man's shoulder, the serpent deliberately coiled itself, but did not appear to meditate an attack. Having made signs to several others, who joined us, I was determined that two men should advance a little in front to divert the attention of the snake, while one should approach La Course behind, and with a long stick endeavor to remove it from his body. The snake, on observing the men advance in front, instantly raised its head, darted out its forked tongue, and shook its rattles; all indications of anger. Every one was now in a state of feverish agitation as to the fate of poor La Course, who still lay slumbering, unconscious of his danger; when the man behind, who had procured a stick seven feet in length, suddenly placed one end of it under the coiled reptile, and succeeded in pitching it upwards of ten feet from the man's body. A shout of joy was the first intimation La Course received of his wonderful escape, while in the meantime the man with the stick pursued the snake, which he killed. It was three feet six inches long."

Toward the end of July the party camped at the mouth of the Walla Walla River, and met a number of Indians of that tribe. Twenty horses were purchased for Robert Stewart's party, and its eleven members left the next day for St. Louis. The Walla Wallas were kind and gentle, yet dignified; as were also the

Indians of the Pierced-Nose tribe, then called by the French *Les Nez Percés*, a name which they still retain. Their houses were large; some square, others oblong, and some conical; they were covered with mats fixed on poles, and varied from twenty to seventy feet in length. These people seemed well to do, and owned many horses, twenty-five of which the traders bought; and from this time on some of them proceeded by land, while the others dragged, paddled, or poled the canoes up the stream. It was at a Pierced-Nose village, at no very great distance from the Columbia, on Lewis River, that the party left their boats and canoes, cacheing them in the willow brush, and leaving them in charge of the chief. Here they secured about fifty horses for pack animals, and a few for riding, but not nearly enough to give a horse to each man. Travelling along up the stream, the thirty-two men who were in Cox's company started for the country of the Spokanes. They had the usual incidents of travel—trouble with pack-horses, lack of grass for their animals, often lack of water for themselves; but before they had gone very far an adventure happened to the author which made it impossible for him to chronicle the doings of his party.

On the 17th of August they stopped for noon, and turned their horses out to graze in very good feed. Cox went apart some distance, and after feasting on the fruit that grew here, lay down and went to sleep. When he awoke, the sun was low and no sound was to be heard. His companions had vanished. It afterward appeared that they had started in three sections,

at a little distance from one another, and that each division of the command supposed Cox to be with one of the other divisions. It was not until toward night that his absence was discovered; and in the meantime he had awakened and set off in pursuit of the party, but soon lost the trail. He was lightly clad in a shirt and pair of cotton trousers and moccasins. He had no arms, no knife, no means of making a fire. The first night out he plucked a quantity of grass, covered himself with that, and slept through the night. On the following day he journeyed eastward, and late in the evening saw, only a mile from him, two horsemen rapidly riding to the east. They were near enough so that he could see that they belonged to his party. He raced after them, shouted, waved his shirt, and did everything possible to attract their attention, but they did not see him. By this time his moccasins had absolutely gone to pieces, and this night the labor of pulling the grass cut his hands. It was two days since he had eaten. Birds and deer were numerous, and close to him fish were seen in the waters, but he could not catch them. That night, however, he found an abundant supply of cherries, which gave him a hearty supper; but the howling of wolves and "growling of bears" kept him awake much of the night. The following day he looked for horse tracks, and at night returned to the place where he had slept before. His feet were now so much lacerated by prickly-pears and the stones over which he had walked, that he was obliged to make bandages for them from the legs of his

trousers. His fear of wolves and bears grew; and perhaps the man's weak condition tempted the animals, for he tells us that they came quite close to him. As he wandered on, he occasionally saw horse tracks, but always old, yet showing that there were people in the country. On the night of the 25th, he found no water, and as he was about to lie down to sleep, he found that he was surrounded by snakes of every kind. "This was a peculiarly, soul-trying moment," he tells us. "I had tasted no fruit since the morning before, and after a painful day's march under a burning sun, could not procure a drop of water to allay my feverish thirst. I was surrounded by a murderous brood of serpents, and ferocious beasts of prey; and without even the consolation of knowing when such misery might have a probable termination. I might truly say with the royal psalmist that 'the snares of death compassed me round about.'" But he lived through it. All the next day he travelled without water, and when at night he came to a stream, he was so weak that he fell into it, and was almost carried away, but caught himself by an overhanging bough and regained the shore. Here he found food and ate it eagerly. "On looking about for a place to sleep, I observed lying on the ground the hollow trunk of a large pine, which had been destroyed by lightning. I retreated into the cavity; and having covered myself completely with large pieces of loose bark, quickly fell asleep. My repose was not of long duration; for at the end of about two hours I was awakened by the growling of a bear, which had re-

moved part of the bark covering and was leaning over me with his snout, hesitating as to the means he should adopt to dislodge me; the narrow limits of the trunk which confined my body prevented him from making the attack with advantage. I instantly sprang up, seized my stick, and uttered a loud cry, which startled him, and caused him to recede a few steps; when he stopped and turned about apparently doubtful whether he would commence an attack. He determined on an assault; but feeling that I had not sufficient strength to meet such an unequal enemy, I thought it prudent to retreat, and accordingly scrambled up an adjoining tree. My flight gave fresh impulse to his courage, and he commenced ascending after me. I succeeded, however, in gaining a branch, which gave me a decided advantage over him; and from which I was enabled to annoy his muzzle and claws in such a manner with my stick as effectually to check his progress. After scraping the bark some time with rage and disappointment, he gave up the task, and retired to my late dormitory, of which he took possession. The fear of falling off, in case I was overcome by sleep, induced me to make several attempts to descend; but each attempt aroused my ursine sentinel; and, after many ineffectual efforts, I was obliged to remain there during the rest of the night. I fixed myself in that part of the trunk from which the principal grand branches forked, and which prevented me from falling during my fitful slumbers. A little after sunrise, the bear quitted the trunk, shook himself, 'cast a longing, lingering look' toward me, and

slowly disappeared in search of his morning repast. After waiting some time, apprehensive of his return, I descended and resumed my journey through the woods."

A few hours later Cox came upon a well-beaten horse-trail, with fresh tracks both of hoofs and human feet. Following this he came that evening to a spot where the party had camped the preceding night; and about a large fire which was still burning found the half-picked bones of grouse and ducks, on which he made a hearty meal, the first flesh he had tasted in a long time. For two days more he followed the trail, on the second day finding fruit. The tracks grew constantly fresher, but the bandages of his feet were constantly wearing out, and, with the exception of his shirt, he was almost naked. At evening he came to a fork in the trail, with fresh tracks on both branches. One led up a hill, the other into a valley. Cox took the upper one, but as it was growing dark, feared that he might not find water at night, and turned back and followed the trail into the valley. Before he had gone far he thought he heard the neighing of a horse, and hurrying onward, before long he saw several horses feeding in a meadow on the other side of a stream. He crossed, and one of the horses approached him, and to the weak and starving man the good beast looked like a real friend. A little farther on he saw smoke, and then two women appeared, who at sight of him fled to a shelter at the farther end of the meadow. From this at once emerged two men, who came running toward him in the most friendly manner. They carried him in their arms to



their home; washed and dressed his wounds, roasted some roots and boiled salmon for him. In fact, they treated him as if he had been a relation rather than a stranger. The men talked with him in signs, and gave him to understand that they knew who he was, and that he had been lost and that they with other Indians and white men had been searching for him. To a man who had been wandering in the desert for fourteen days, the sight of these Indians, and the harsh, guttural sounds by which they expressed their thoughts, were perfectly delightful. Full, warm, and clad, for the first time in two weeks, he slept that night as he had never slept before.

The next day the men took him in a canoe across the Cœur d'Alene River, and having given him deer-skin clothing, they set off on horseback to the eastward.

After seven hours they came to where some of the Canadians were at work getting wood. François Gardepie joined them just before they reached the tents, and taking Cox for an Indian, spoke to him. It was not until he replied in French that he recognized him, and there was much rejoicing in all the camp when he joined his people. The party had supposed that he had long perished; for considering his youth and his inexperience in the Indian country, the oldest voyageurs had given him up after the sixth day.



## CHAPTER XX

### ROSS COX

#### II

**I**T was October 17, the anniversary of the sailing from New York of the "Beaver," that Cox and Farnham set out on their trading expedition to the Flatheads, and on the 10th of November they reached the small village of these people. They were charmed with their frank and hospitable reception, and with the superiority in cleanliness of these Indians over other tribes that they had seen. They determined to remain here for a while, and began the building of a log house in which to winter. Meantime the Indians kept coming in, and they made quite a trade in beaver. In December, Cox, having had a good canoe built of cedar planks, took leave of Farnham, and with six men set out to descend the river to Spokane, which was reached about New Year's day.

During a trip to the Flatheads, Cox witnessed an extraordinary display of fortitude by a Blackfoot prisoner whom they were torturing. It is a graphic picture of the savage cruelty of the savage man, and is far too horrible to print. An effort was made by the traders

to put an end to these tortures, and the Flatheads were induced to set free, and send away to their people, a number of Blackfeet women. To these prisoners, now being set free, it was explained that torture between the tribes ought to cease, and as they were turned loose unharmed, it was hoped that they would persuade their people on the prairies to abstain in future from torturing Flathead captives. Cox is enthusiastic about the attractiveness of the Flatheads. It was here that he was successfully treated for rheumatism by an old Indian doctor; the cure being a morning bath in the river, now frozen over, through a hole in the ice, followed by rubbing of the affected parts by the old doctor. After twenty-five days of the treatment the trouble had entirely disappeared.

In August, 1814, a party of sixty men, including proprietors and clerks, left Fort George to go up the river with trade goods. On the way they met some Indians, who attempted to steal various small articles, and were warned to stop it, but paid no attention to the orders. Three caught in the act of pilfering were flogged. At night the party was attacked by Indians, and a Canadian was killed. There were many narrow escapes. Passing up the river they met with the Walla Wallas, who received them in their usual friendly way. A little later the party separated, the division to which Cox was assigned going to Spokane House, where the Indians, who had expended all their ammunition, received them with great joy. An amusing sketch is given of the personality and character of the Scotchman, McDonald,

celebrated for his great size, his flaming red hair, and his daring bravery. A small tribe of Indians were camped between an immense fall in the Columbia, known as La Chaudière, and Spokane House; their chief was a philosopher, frugal, thrifty, opposed to gambling, and so in many respects different from the average Indian.

In October the various parties returned to Fort George with the proceeds of their trade, and on the 18th of November again set out for the interior. Not far above the mouth of the Walla Walla they met a number of Indians coming down. They stopped the first canoes to ask for tobacco, and as they passed the last ones, endeavored to take from them some bales of goods. The arms of the canoemen were not within reach, but each of the proprietors or clerks carried his arms. Every effort was made to avoid open hostilities. The canoemen tried to beat the Indians off with their paddles, and the Indians had not yet attempted to use their arms. When a tall Indian refused to let go the bale of goods that he was trying to take from McDonald's canoe, M'Kay struck him with the butt end of his gun, and obliged him to drop the bale. The Indian instantly placed an arrow on his bow, which he aimed at McDonald, who quickly stretched forth his arm, seized the arrow, broke it to pieces, and threw them into the Indian's face. The Indian, by this time very angry, had ordered his canoe to push off, and was just about to shoot an arrow at McDonald when M'Kay fired and killed him. His two companions were about to use

their bows, but McDonald, who had a double-barrelled gun, shot them both, killing one and severely wounding the other. The fight was on, but the Indians threw themselves in the bottom of their canoes out of sight, and the vessels soon drifted down the river, and out of gunshot. The traders at once went ashore and armed themselves. The Indians lurked about and shot at them, but without effect. Embarking, the white men paddled to a narrow island in the river, built breast-works, and prepared for defence. The next day the wind blew hard, and they were obliged to pass the night on the island. Meantime the Indians were signaling, and canoes could be heard crossing and recrossing the river. The spirits of the white men were low, and they believed that they were likely all to be killed. The next day the traders sent out a flag of truce to the enemy, and asked for a talk, being determined to pay the relatives of the dead for the loss, rather than to have any fighting. The Indians refused this, however, and declared that two white men must be delivered to them to be treated as they thought best. One of these white men, it was explained, must be McDonald. The offers made by the traders had been sufficiently liberal, but the sentiment of the savages seemed to be that these offers must be refused, and that white men must be killed to accompany the dead Indians on their way to the home of the dead. After a heated discussion, it became evident that there was little hope of a compromise or of peace. One by one the Indians sulkily drew away from the council and joined their friends who were

sitting at a distance behind them. Just before the conference was over, however, it was interrupted by the arrival of a dozen mounted Indians, who dashed into the space between the two parties, and halted there. These men were under the leadership of a young chief whose courage and wisdom was respected by all the Indians of the country. He made a strong plea for a peaceful settlement of the difficulty, finally declaring that no one of the Indians should dare to attack the whites. This speech put a different look on matters, and the Indians presently consented to the proposed compromise, and smoked with the traders. The wounded and the relatives of the dead proved quite willing to accept the payments offered, and friendly relations were renewed.

In May, 1816, the author found himself once more at Okinagan, and this time occupying the chief position there. He at once set to work to rebuild the post, where he spent the summer. The point between the Okinagan River and the Columbia, where the trading post was built, was absolutely free from rattlesnakes, although the surrounding country abounded with them. The snakes were frequently eaten by the Canadians, who skinned them as eels are skinned, and then spitted them on a stick run through the body, and roasted them before a fire. Cox tells a curious story of the treatment by an old Indian of a young woman supposed to have consumption. The treatment consisted in killing a dog and placing the foot and leg of the patient within the newly killed carcass until the flesh became cold. They were then taken out and bandaged with warm flannel.

Besides this, she took daily a small quantity of bark in a glass of port-wine. The result was that her condition greatly improved; she regained her appetite, and in the autumn was strong enough to travel across the mountains with her husband. The following summer Cox met her at Rainy Lake in the full enjoyment of health. Cox also tells of a white man, absolutely dying of a decline, who was cured by being placed at short intervals in the body of a newly killed horse. After two treatments of this kind, at intervals of a few days, he began to regain his strength, and by adhering to simple and careful living, was finally restored to his ordinary health.

Wolves were very abundant here, and were very troublesome to the horses. "These destructive animals annually destroy numbers of horses," Cox writes, "particularly during the winter season, when the latter get entangled in the snow, in which situation they become an easy prey to their light-footed pursuers, ten or fifteen of which will often fasten on one animal, and with their long fangs in a few minutes separate the head from the body. If, however, the horses are not prevented from using their legs, they sometimes punish the enemy severely; as an instance of this, I saw one morning the bodies of two of our horses which had been killed the night before, and around were lying eight dead and maimed wolves; some with their brains scattered about, and others with their limbs and ribs broken by the hoofs of the furious animals in their vain attempts to escape from their sanguinary assailants.



“While I was at Spokane I went occasionally to the horse prairie, which is nearly surrounded by partially wooded hills, for the purpose of watching the manoeuvres of the wolves in their combined attacks. The first announcement of their approach was a few shrill currish barks at intervals, like the outpost firing of skirmishing parties. These were answered by similar barking from an opposite direction, until the sounds gradually approximated, and at length ceased on the junction of the different parties. We prepared our guns, and concealed ourselves behind a thick cover. In the meantime, the horses, sensible of the approaching danger, began to paw the ground, snort, toss up their heads, look wildly about them, and exhibit all the symptoms of fear. One or two stallions took the lead, and appeared to await with a degree of comparative composure for the appearance of the enemy.

“The allies at length entered the field in a semi-circular form, with their flanks extended for the evident purpose of surrounding their prey. They were between two and three hundred strong. The horses, on observing their movement, knew from experience its object, and dreading to encounter so numerous a force, instantly turned around and galloped off in a contrary direction. Their flight was the signal for the wolves to advance; and immediately uttering a simultaneous yell, they charged after the fugitives, still preserving their crescent form. Two or three of the horses, which were not in the best condition, were quickly overtaken by the advanced guard of the enemy. The former, find-



ing themselves unable to keep up with the band, commenced kicking at their pursuers, several of which received some severe blows; but these being reinforced by others, they would have shortly despatched the horses, had we not just in time emerged from our place of concealment and discharged a volley at the enemy's center, by which a few were brought down. The whole battalion instantly wheeled about and fled toward the hills in the utmost disorder; while the horses, on hearing the fire, changed their course, and galloped up to us. Our appearance saved several of them from the fangs of their foes; and by their neighing they seemed to express their joy and gratitude at our timely interference."

In portions of the country inhabited by the Walla Wallas, Nez Percés, and Shoshones, wild horses were at this time very abundant. Sometimes from seven hundred to a thousand were seen in a band, and persons who had crossed the continent by the Missouri route told Cox that in the Snake Indian country bands varying from three to four thousand were frequently seen. The Spaniards at San Francisco informed the traders of the Northwest Company that in the year 1812 they were obliged to kill upward of thirty thousand horses in California in order to preserve sufficient grass for the buffalo. Just what is meant by California in this connection is uncertain, since it is not known that the buffalo were ever found in the California of modern times.

In his description of the horses of the country, Cox tells of a ride of seventy-two miles which he made be-

tween twelve o'clock in the morning and soon after dark, to outstrip some rival traders who were on their way to the Flatheads. The Flatheads were out of tobacco, but Farnham, who was in charge of the party, felt sure that if a supply of this commodity were brought them at once, they would promise their skins to him. Cox, riding a splendid horse, known as *Le Bleu*, reached Farnham two hours in advance of his rivals, and secured the trade.

In the summer of 1816 Cox determined to abandon Indian trading, and applied to the proprietors for leave, which was granted with regret. Nevertheless, he wintered at Okinagan.

In April, 1817, Cox joined a party of eighty-six men who embarked in two barges and nine canoes from Fort George to ascend the Columbia. They continued up the river with various adventures, seeing Indians constantly, but having no trouble with them, and on the seventeenth day twenty-three of the party who were to cross the Rocky Mountains to the plains left the loaded canoes and continued up the Columbia, past Okinagan, the mouth of the Spokane River, to Great Kettle Falls. Continuing, they passed through the lakes on the Columbia. The river grew narrower and narrower, and the current swifter, and at length they reached the Rocky Mountain portage, where they were to leave their canoes. The hard work done on the trip had so far exhausted many of the men, that they were now practically unable to work; and seven men, six Canadians and an Englishman, were sent back in the best

canoe to Spokane House. Only one of them reached there alive, having been found by two Indians on the borders of the upper lake, and by them transported to Spokane House. Now came an overland journey on foot, where the nine remaining men were obliged to carry loads of about ninety pounds each. The journey was very difficult, over steep mountains, across rapid streams, and through deep snow fields. On the 31st of May they reached two small lakes on the summit of the mountains, at which they encamped. From these lakes a stream joins a branch of the Columbia River, while another, called Rocky Mountain River, empties into Peace River, and so takes its way to the Arctic Ocean.

The next day they reached a beautiful meadow ground, where five of the company's horses were found grazing, and their pack saddles were placed conspicuously near a large fire which was still burning. The animals had been sent up from Rocky Mountain House to meet them.

The next day, in crossing the Rocky Mountain River, a series of accidents happened, by which the first raft made was lost, and the second got away, carrying several men with it, the result being that the party was now separated. From this time on until they reached Rocky Mountain House, they did not get together, and there was some suffering from hunger and cold. Nor was their situation much better at Rocky Mountain House, for they were unable there to obtain provisions, the people here being themselves on short allowance. On the 7th of June they left Rocky Mountain House, and

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soon entered the Athabasca River, and followed it down until they reached Elk River, which they ascended, and at last met Alexander Stewart and the Slave Lake brigade. From here they proceeded eastward, down the Beaver River to Isle à la Crosse, reached the English River, Cumberland House, and the Saskatchewan, and thence went through Lake Winepic to Fort Alexander and by way of Rat Portage to Rainy Lake and Fort William.

From here eastward their way led through the more or less settled country occupied largely by Canadian farmers. The party continued eastward, until on September 19, five months and three days after leaving the Pacific Ocean, Cox reached Montreal, and his journeyings were at an end.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES

#### I

**A**T the end of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth century a line of Spanish settlements ran from Mexico northward along the Rocky Mountains, terminating in the important town of Taos. To the north, north-east, and north-west of this town were other settlements, occupied by the Spaniards and their descendants, and the streams and geographical features of the country bore Spanish names—almost up to the headwaters of the Rio Grande del Norte. North of the Arkansas there was a change of tongue, and the names were English, or French, given much later by American trappers who had pushed westward, or by French Canadians and Creoles, who were early voyageurs over the plains.

Though Taos was an important place, it did not equal, either in size or wealth, the town of Santa Fé.

The first settlements of what is now New Mexico were made about the end of the sixteenth century, and a colony was established on the Rio del Norte, in New Mexico. Agriculture was practised, and mines were discovered and worked. The Spaniards, in their

greed for precious metals, made slaves of the docile Indians, and forced them to labor in the mines, under circumstances of the greatest severity and hardship. Almost a hundred years later, in August, 1680, this ill treatment caused the insurrection of the Pueblos, which put an end to many a flourishing Spanish settlement, and, temporarily, to the country's development. For a time the Spaniards were driven out, but it was for a time only; a little later they returned, resubdued the country, and by the close of the century were stronger than ever. Nevertheless, the Pueblo revolt was not without its good effect, and during the eighteenth century the Indians were far better treated than they had been before.

In the year 1806, Captain Zebulon M. Pike crossed the plains and reached the city of Santa Fé. His return told the inhabitants of the farther west of a country beyond the plains where there were towns and people who would purchase goods brought to them. Previous to this, a merchant of Kaskaskia, named Morrison, had sent a French Creole named La Lande up the Platte River, directing him to go to Santa Fé to trade; but La Lande, though he reached that city, never returned, nor accounted to his employer for the goods that were intrusted to him. James Pursley, an American, was perhaps the second man to cross these plains, and reach the Spanish settlements. When Captain Pike returned, the news of these settlements, hitherto unknown, created a great interest throughout the slowly advancing frontier.

Expeditions went out to Santa Fé in 1812, but the traders were suspected by the New Mexicans of being spies, their goods were confiscated, and they themselves imprisoned and detained for years, some of them returning to the United States in 1821. After this, other parties went out, and the trading which they did with the Spaniards was successful and profitable. More and more expeditions set forth, often manned by people who were entirely ignorant of the country through which they were to pass, and of the hardships which they were to face. Some of these died from starvation or thirst, or, at the very least, suffered terribly, and often were unsuccessful, but about 1822 the trade with Santa Fé became established. The distance from the American settlements across the plains to Santa Fé was hardly half that from Vera Cruz to Santa Fé, and there was great profit in the trade; but it was not without its dangers. Indians were constantly met with, and many of the traders did not understand how to treat them. Some traders were robbed; others, resisting harshly and sometimes killing a savage, were attacked, robbed of their animals, and occasionally lost a man.

Among the interesting records of the plains of these early times is Josiah Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies, or the Journal of a Santa Fé Trader, During Eight Expeditions Across the Great Western Prairies*.

Gregg, an invalid, made his first trip across the plains on the advice of his physician. The effect of his journey was to re-establish his health and to beget in him a passion for prairie life. He soon became in-



terested, as a proprietor, in the Santa Fé trade, and for eight successive years continued to follow this business. The period covered by his volumes is from 1831 to 1840, during which time the trade was at its height.

The caravan with which Gregg started, set out with near a hundred wagons, of which one-half were hauled by oxen and the remainder by mules. The very night that they left Council Grove their cattle stampeded, but being corralled within the circle of wagons, did not escape.

Having a large company, it was natural that there should be among it a number of people who were constantly seeing dangers that did not exist. They had been out but a short time when, "Alarms now began to accumulate more rapidly upon us. A couple of persons had a few days before been chased to the wagons by a band of—buffalo; and this evening the encampment was barely formed when two hunters came bolting in with information that a hundred, perhaps of the same 'enemy' were at hand—at least this was the current opinion afterward. The hubbub occasioned by this fearful news had scarcely subsided, when another arrived on a panting horse, crying out 'Indians! Indians! I've just escaped from a couple, who pursued me to the very camp!' 'To arms! to arms!' resounded from every quarter—and just then a wolf, attracted by the fumes of broiling buffalo bones, sent up a most hideous howl across the creek. 'Some one in distress!' was instantly shouted: 'To his relief!' vociferated the crowd; and off they bolted, one and all, arms in hand,

hurly-burly, leaving the camp entirely unprotected, so that had an enemy been at hand indeed, and approached us from the opposite direction, they might easily have taken possession of the wagons. Before they had returned, however, a couple of hunters came in and laughed very heartily at the expense of the first alarmist, whom they had just chased into the camp."

While baseless Indian scares were common, they sometimes had genuine frights, as in the case of a large body of Indians met on the Cimarron River. On this occasion, "It was a genuine alarm—a tangible reality. These warriors, however, as we soon discovered, were only the vanguard of a 'countless host,' who were by this time pouring over the opposite ridge, and galloping directly toward us.

"The wagons were soon irregularly 'formed' upon the hillside: but in accordance with the habitual carelessness of caravan traders, a great portion of the men were unprepared for the emergency. Scores of guns were 'empty,' and as many more had been wetted by the recent showers, and would not 'go off.' Here was one calling for balls; another for powder; a third for flints. Exclamations, such as, 'I've broken my ramrod!'—'I've spilt my caps!'—'I've rammed down a ball without powder!'—'My gun is choked; give me yours!'—were heard from different quarters; while a timorous 'greenhorn' would perhaps cry out: 'Here, take my gun, you can outshoot me!' The more daring bolted off to encounter the enemy at once, while the timid and cautious took a stand with presented rifle



CARAVAN ON THE MARCH.  
*From Gregg's Commerce of the Prairies.*



behind the wagons. The Indians, who were in advance, made a bold attempt to press upon us, which came near costing them dearly, for some of our fiery backwoodsmen more than once had their rusty, but unerring, rifles directed upon the intruders, some of whom would inevitably have fallen before their deadly aim, had not some of the more prudent traders interposed. The Indians made demonstrations no less hostile, rushing, with ready sprung bows, upon a portion of our men who had gone in search of water, and mischief would, perhaps, have ensued, had not the impetuosity of the warriors been checked by the wise men of the nation.

“The Indians were collecting around us, however, in such great numbers, that it was deemed expedient to force them away, so as to resume our march, or at least to take a more advantageous position. Our company was therefore mustered and drawn up in ‘line of battle’; and, accompanied by the sound of a drum and fife, we marched toward the main group of the Indians. The latter seemed far more delighted than frightened with this strange parade and music, a spectacle they had, no doubt, never witnessed before, and perhaps looked upon the whole movement rather as a complimentary salute than a hostile array, for there was no interpreter through whom any communication could be conveyed to them. But, whatever may have been their impressions, one thing is certain—that the principal chief (who was dressed in a long red coat of strouding, or coarse cloth) appeared to have full con-

fidence in the virtues of his calumet, which he lighted, and came boldly forward to meet our war-like corps, serenely smoking the 'pipe of peace.' Our captain, now taking a whiff with the savage chief, directed him by signs to cause his warriors to retire. This most of them did, to rejoin the long train of squaws and papooses with the baggage, who followed in the rear, and were just then seen emerging from beyond the hills."

It was estimated that there were not less than two or three thousand of these Indians, who were supposed to be Blackfeet and Gros Ventres. They remained for some days in the neighborhood of the train, and kept the traders on tenterhooks of anxiety, lest there should be an attack, or a wholesale driving off of cattle. Later there were talks—or at least friendly meeting—and giving of presents; and finally, the Indians moved away without doing any harm. It was but a day or two later, however, when some Comanches had a skirmish with the train, but without evil results to either party.

It was not long after this that the train, still journeying westward, saw evidence of their approach to the Spanish settlements. On the 5th of July, as they were proceeding after the celebration of the day before, they met a Mexican *cibolero*, or buffalo hunter, one of those hardy wanderers of the plains, who used to venture out from the Spanish settlements to secure dried buffalo meat, killing buffalo and trading with the Indians. These wanderers made long journeys, which often extended as far as the country claimed and occupied by Crows, Cheyennes, and Pawnees. Perfectly ac-

customed to the life of the plains, armed with gun and lance, and bow and arrows, they were not less free than the aboriginal inhabitants, whose methods in many ways they imitated, and whose blood many of them shared. Like the Indians, these buffalo hunters killed their game chiefly with the arrow and the lance, and drying its flesh, packed it on their mules, or in their ox-carts, and carried it back to the settlements to trade.

It was not very long after, that Gregg, leaving the train and pushing ahead with others, found himself in the city of Santa Fé. He was much impressed by the new country, inhabited by a race as different as possible from those whom he had left in his Eastern home. He was a close observer and records interestingly much of what he saw.

The wild tribes are described — the Navajoes, Apaches, Yutas, and Caiguas, or Kiawas. Much is said of the raids of the Apaches and the terror in which they kept the inhabitants of the towns, as well as the Mexican troops stationed there to protect these inhabitants. The savage butchery of a lot of Apaches by a troop of men, under an American leader, may perhaps be the incident which has given rise to many similar tales concerning the similar slaughters of the olden times. It seems there was a celebrated Apache chief, called Juan José, whose cunning and audacity had caused him to be feared throughout the whole country. The government of Sonora had announced that all booty taken from the savages under his command should be the



property of those who took it. "Accordingly, in the spring of 1837 a party of some twenty men, composed chiefly of foreigners, spurred on by the love of gain, and never doubting but the Indians, after so many years of successful robberies, must be possessed of a vast amount of property, set out with an American as their commander, who had long resided in the country. In a few days they reached a rancheria of about fifty warriors with their families, among whom was the famous Juan José himself, and three other principal chiefs. On seeing the Americans advance, the former at once gave them to understand that, if they had come to fight, they were ready to accommodate them; but, on being assured by the leader that they were merely bent on a trading expedition, a friendly interview was immediately established between the parties. The American captain having determined to put these obnoxious chiefs to death under any circumstances, soon caused a little field-piece, which had been concealed from the Indians, to be loaded with chain and canister shot, and to be held in readiness for use. The warriors were then invited to the camp to receive a present of flour, which was placed within range of the cannon. While they were occupied in dividing the contents of the bag, they were fired upon, and a considerable number of their party killed on the spot! The remainder were then attacked with small arms, and about twenty slain, including Juan José and the other chiefs. Those who escaped became afterward their own avengers in a manner which proved terribly disastrous to another party

of Americans, who happened at the time to be trapping on Rio Gila, not far distant. The enraged savages resolved to take summary vengeance upon these unfortunate trappers, and falling upon them, massacred them every one."

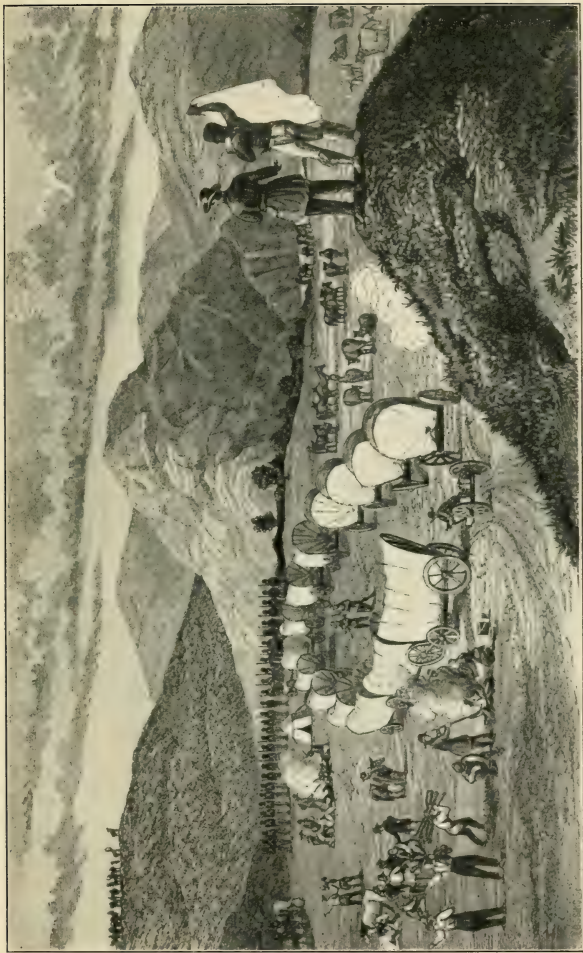
It is added that: "The Apaches, previous to this date, had committed but few depredations upon foreigners (*i. e.* Americans), restrained either by fear or respect. Small parties of the latter were permitted to pass the highways of the wilderness unmolested, while large caravans of Mexicans suffered frequent attacks."

It is generally known that the Indians of the plains regarded the Mexicans as a different people from the dwellers of the United States, and there was even a time when a distinction was made between the inhabitants of the United States and those of the Republic of Texas.

The bounty on scalps, adopted by the Mexican government in 1837, was one of the many schemes devised by the people of the borderland to check the ravages of the Indians. By this *Proyecto de Guerra* a series of bounties were paid for scalps, running from one hundred dollars for the scalp of a full-grown man, down to fifty for that of a woman, and twenty-five for that of a little child. For a brief time this bounty was paid, and Gregg himself saw a scalp brought in on a pole by a Mexican officer in command of troops, precisely as the Indians, returning from the war-path, used to bring their scalps into their home village.

In 1838, Gregg returned across the plains, meeting

a few adventures, among which the most important was an attack on the train by Indians, who were supposed to be Pawnees. The effort was merely to steal their horses, which, happily, they saved.



WAGONS PARKED FOR THE NIGHT.

From Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*.



## CHAPTER XXII

### THE COMMERCE OF THE PRAIRIES

#### II

**I**N 1839, after having been only a few months in the "States," Gregg was unable to resist his longing for the free life of the prairies and began to make preparations for another trip to the Mexican settlements. At that time the ports of Mexico were blockaded by French men-of-war, and the demand for goods was great, with a prospect of correspondingly high prices. Late in April the wagon train, loaded with twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of goods, crossed the Arkansas, not far from the mouth of the Canadian fork. They had not proceeded far before they lost a teamster; "a Cherokee shopkeeper came up to us with an attachment for debt against a free mulatto, whom we had engaged as teamster. The poor fellow had no alternative but to return with the importunate creditor, who committed him at once to the care of 'Judge Lynch' for trial. We ascertained afterward that he had been sentenced to 'take the benefit of the bankrupt law' after the manner of the Cherokees of that neighborhood. This is done by stripping and tying the victim to a tree; when each creditor, with a

good cowhide or hickory switch in his hand, scores the amount of the bill due upon his bare back. One stripe for every dollar due is the usual process of 'whitewashing'; and as the application of the lash is accompanied by all sorts of quaint remarks, the exhibition affords no small merriment to those present, with the exception, no doubt, of the delinquent himself. After the ordeal is over, the creditors declare themselves perfectly satisfied: nor could they, as is said, ever be persuaded thereafter to receive one red cent of the amount due, even if it were offered to them. As the poor mulatto was also in our debt, and was perhaps apprehensive that we might exact payment in the same currency, he never showed himself again."

The leaders of the party just setting out were well armed with Colt's repeating rifles and revolvers, and carried, besides, two small cannon. Among the men were a number of young fellows from the East, most of them quite without prairie experience. They had not been many days out when one of the party, out hunting, became lost, and not returning at night, muskets were fired to guide him to camp; but he imagined that the firing was done by hostile Indians, and fled from the sound. Finally, according to his statement, he was attacked during the night by a panther, which he succeeded in beating off with the butt of his gun. It was imagined, however, from the peculiar odor with which the shattered gun was still redolent when he reached camp, that the "painter" that he had driven off was not many degrees removed in affinity from a skunk.



When the train reached the north fork of the Canadian, they met with a considerable camp of Comanches, with whom they had some friendly intercourse. With them was a body of United States Dragoons, under Lieutenant Bowman, to whom had been intrusted the task of trying to make peace with the Comanches, and so protecting the settlements of the border. Among these Comanches were a number of Mexican captives—women, boys, and small children—of whom Gregg notes that a number of them were still well able to speak Spanish. In other words, their captivity had been so short that they had a clear memory of the events of earlier life. An effort was made to purchase several of these captives, in order to return them to their homes. Most of them, however, were unwilling to go, and for a variety of reasons; one of the lads, only ten or twelve years old, explaining that by his life among the Indians he had become “now too much of a brute to live among Christians.” One lad Gregg did purchase, and was repaid by much gratitude.

It was near the Canadian River, which they had now reached, that a small party of Americans experienced terrible suffering in the winter of 1832 and '33. “The party,” Gregg says, “consisted of twelve men, chiefly citizens of Missouri. Their baggage and about ten thousand dollars in specie were packed upon mules. They took the route of the Canadian River, fearing to venture on the northern prairies at that season of the year. Having left Santa Fé in December, they had

proceeded without accident thus far, when a large body of Comanches and Kiawas were seen advancing toward them. Being well acquainted with the treacherous and pusillanimous disposition of those races, the traders prepared at once for defence; but the savages having made a halt at some distance, began to approach one by one, or in small parties, making a great show of friendship all the while, until most of them had collected on the spot. Finding themselves surrounded in every direction, the travellers now began to move on, in hopes of getting rid of the intruders; but the latter were equally ready for the start, and, mounting their horses, kept jogging on in the same direction. The first act of hostility perpetrated by the Indians proved fatal to one of the American traders named Pratt, who was shot dead while attempting to secure two mules which had become separated from the rest. Upon this, the companions of the slain man immediately dismounted and commenced a fire upon the Indians, which was warmly returned, whereby another man of the name of Mitchell was killed.

“By this time the traders had taken off their packs and piled them around for protection; and now falling to work with their hands, they very soon scratched out a trench deep enough to protect them from the shot of the enemy. The latter made several desperate charges, but they seemed too careful of their own personal safety, notwithstanding the enormous superiority of their numbers, to venture too near the rifles of the Americans. In a few hours all the animals of the traders

were either killed or wounded, but no personal damage was done to the remaining ten men, with the exception of a wound in the thigh received by one, which was not at the time considered dangerous.

“During the siege, the Americans were in great danger of perishing from thirst, as the Indians had complete command of all the water within reach. Starvation was not so much to be dreaded, because, in cases of necessity, they could live on the flesh of their slain animals, some of which lay stretched close around them. After being pent up for thirty-six hours in this horrible hole, during which time they had seldom ventured to raise their heads above the surface without being shot at, they resolved to make a bold sortie in the night, as any death was preferable to the death that awaited them there. As there was not an animal left that was at all in a condition to travel, the owners of the money gave permission to all to take and appropriate to themselves whatever amount each man could safely undertake to carry. In this way they started with a few hundred dollars, of which but little ever reached the United States. The remainder was buried deep in the sand, in hope that it might escape the cupidity of the savages, but to very little purpose, for they were afterward seen by some Mexican traders making a great display of specie, which was without doubt taken from this unfortunate cache.

“With every prospect of being discovered, overtaken and butchered, but resolved to sell their lives as dearly as possible, they at last emerged from their hiding-

place, and moved on silently and slowly until they found themselves beyond the purlieus of the Indian camps. Often did they look back in the direction where three to five hundred savages were supposed to watch their movements, but, much to their astonishment, no one appeared to be in pursuit. The Indians, believing, no doubt, that the property of the traders would come into their hands, and having no amateur predilection for taking scalps at the risk of losing their own, appeared willing enough to let the spoliated adventurers depart without further molestation.

“The destitute travellers, having run themselves short of provisions, and being no longer able to kill game for want of materials to load their rifles, they were very soon reduced to the necessity of sustaining life upon roots and the tender bark of trees. After travelling for several days in this desperate condition, with lacerated feet, and utter prostration of mind and body, they began to disagree among themselves about the route to be pursued, and eventually separated into two distinct parties. Five of these unhappy men steered a westward course, and after a succession of sufferings and privations which almost surpassed belief, they reached the settlements of the Creek Indians, near the Arkansas River, where they were treated with great kindness and hospitality. The other five wandered about in the greatest state of distress and bewilderment, and only two finally succeeded in getting out of the mazes of the wilderness.” Mooney, *Kiowa Calendar*, p. 255, gives the account of this occurrence from Kiowa

sources. They say that one Indian, Black Wolf, was killed in the fight.

After many difficulties, Gregg reached Santa Fé again, and prepared to start south for Chihuahua, where a better market for his goods was expected. They crossed the famous Jornada del Muerto, and reached El Paso del Norte, and at last Chihuahua. Here was a country devoted to cattle raising; the herds, according to Gregg, being almost as numerous as those of the buffalo on the northern plains. Some time was devoted to journeying through northern Mexico.

On his return to Santa Fé, Gregg, having ordered his men to "rope a beef" for food, from the herds which covered the plains, got into trouble with the Mexican authorities, and was greatly delayed, being taken back to Chihuahua and tried for his offence, but acquitted on the ground of ignorance of the laws and the customs of the country.

Shortly before they reached the Staked Plains, on their return, they were attacked by a war-party of Pawnees on foot, who succeeded in running off a few of the horses and in wounding two or three men. Their Comanche guide took them safely across the plains, until at last they reached the Canadian River. Gregg relates of the wind of the prairie: "It will often blow a gale for days, and even weeks together, without slackening for a moment, except occasionally at night. It is for this reason, as well as on account of the rains, that percussion guns are preferable upon the prairies, particularly for those who understand their

use. The winds are frequently so severe as to sweep away both sparks and priming from a flintlock, and thus render it wholly ineffective."

While following down the Canadian they found buffalo very abundant, and the gentleness and lack of suspicion of the animal is noted. "On one occasion, two or three hunters, who were a little in advance of the caravan, perceiving a herd quietly grazing in an open glade, they 'crawled upon' them after the manner of the 'still-hunters.' Their first shot having brought down a fine fat cow, they slipped up behind her, and resting their guns over her body, shot two or three others, without occasioning any serious disturbance or surprise to their companions; for, extraordinary as it may appear, if the buffalo neither see nor smell the hunter, they will pay but little attention to the crack of guns, or to the mortality which is being dealt among them."

Gregg's praiseworthy reflections on the wanton killing of the buffalo are made in entire good faith, yet only a day or two later he frankly confesses to some unnecessary killing that he did himself. He says of the excessive destruction: "The slaughter of these animals is frequently carried to an excess, which shows the depravity of the human heart in very bold relief. Such is the excitement that generally prevails at the sight of these fat denizens of the prairies, that very few hunters appear able to refrain from shooting as long as the game remains within reach of their rifles; nor can they ever permit a fair shot to escape them. Whether the



mere pleasure of taking life is the incentive of these brutal excesses, I will not pretend to decide; but one thing is very certain, that the buffalo killed on these prairies far exceeds the wants of the travellers; or what might be looked upon as the exigencies of rational sport." In a foot-note he adds: "The same barbarous propensity is observable in regard to wild horses. Most persons appear unable to restrain this wanton inclination to take life, when a mustang approaches within rifle shot. Many a stately steed thus falls a victim to the cruelty of man."

In April, 1840, Gregg reached the end of his journey—his last trip upon the plains. He was as susceptible as other men have shown themselves to the attractions of the free life of the prairie, its "sovereign independence"; but acknowledges the disadvantages which follow an almost entire separation from one's fellow-men. Nevertheless, "Since that time," he says, "I have striven in vain to reconcile myself to the even tenor of civilized life in the United States; and have sought in its amusements and its society a substitute for those high excitements which have attached me so strongly to prairie life. Yet I am almost ashamed to confess that scarcely a day passes without my experiencing a pang of regret that I am not now roving at large upon those Western plains. Nor do I find my taste peculiar; for I have hardly known a man who has ever become familiar with the kind of life which I have led for so many years, that has not relinquished it with regret."

In his account of animals of the prairies, Gregg



names first the mustang; and here we find one of the earliest mentions of a traditional wild horse, which has come down in many a story.

"The beauty of the mustang is proverbial," he writes. "One in particular has been celebrated by hunters, of which marvellous stories are told. He has been represented as a medium-sized stallion of perfect symmetry, milk-white, save a pair of black ears—a natural 'pacer,' and so fleet, it is said, as to leave far behind every horse that had been tried in pursuit of him, without breaking his 'pace.' But I infer that this story is somewhat mythical, from the difficulty which one finds in fixing the abiding place of its equine hero. He is familiarly known, by common report, all over the great prairies. The trapper celebrates him in the vicinity of the northern Rocky Mountains; the hunter on the Arkansas or in the midst of the plains, while others have him pacing at the rate of half a mile a minute on the borders of Texas. It is hardly a matter of surprise, then, that a creature of such an ubiquitary existence should never have been caught.

"The wild horses are generally well-formed, with trim and clean limbs; still their elegance has been much exaggerated by travellers, because they have seen them at large, abandoned to their wild and natural gaiety. Then, it is true, they appear superb indeed; but when caught and tamed, they generally dwindle down to ordinary ponies. Large droves are very frequently seen upon the prairies, sometimes of hundreds together, gambolling and curvetting within a short distance of

the caravans. It is sometimes difficult to keep them from dashing among the loose stock of the traveller, which would be exceedingly dangerous, for, once together, they are hard to separate again, particularly if the number of mustangs is much the greatest. It is a singular fact, that the gentlest wagon-horse (even though quite fagged with travel), once among a drove of mustangs, will often acquire in a few hours all the intractable wildness of his untamed companions."

It is many years since the real mustang has been seen on the prairie. To-day his place is taken by the range horse, an animal of very different character, though of similar habits. Yet, we well recall a time, long before the day of the range, and its cattle or horses, when journeying through the southern country, little bands of mustangs could sometimes be seen. One such, which passed once close to our command, was noticeable for the presence among its numbers of a gigantic mule, which it had picked up from some travelling party, and which was now as wild as the horses themselves.

Naturally, Gregg has much to say about the buffalo, and he voices an impression which long had currency, and may still be believed by people, that the bulls were sentinels and guards for the cows and calves. Speaking in general terms, he says: "A buffalo cow is about as heavy as a common ox, while a large fat bull will weigh perhaps double as much.

"These are very gregarious animals. At some seasons, however, the cows rather incline to keep to them-

selves; at other times they are mostly seen in the centre of the gang, while the bulls are scattered around, frequently to a considerable distance, evidently guarding the cows and calves. And on the outskirts of the buffalo range, we are apt to meet with small gangs of bulls alone, a day or two's travel distant, as though performing the office of 'pique guards' for the main herds."

In his remarks about the gray wolf and its habits, he touches on the question as to whether the big wolf of America ever voluntarily attacks man. He says: "I have never known these animals, rapacious as they are, extend their attacks to man, though they probably would, if very hungry, and a favorable opportunity presented itself. I shall not soon forget an adventure with one of them, many years ago, on the frontier of Missouri. Riding near the prairie border, I perceived one of the largest and fiercest of the gray species, which had just descended from the west, and seemed famished to desperation. I at once prepared for a chase and, being without arms, I caught up a cudgel, when I betook me valiantly to the charge, much stronger, as I soon discovered, in my cause than in my equipment. The wolf was in no humor to flee, however, but boldly met me the full half-way. I was soon disarmed, for my club broke upon the animal's head. He then 'laid to' my horse's legs, which, not relishing the conflict, gave a plunge and sent me whirling over his head, and made his escape, leaving me and the wolf at close quarters. I was no sooner upon my feet than my antagonist re-

newed the charge; but, being without weapon, or any means of awakening an emotion of terror, save through his imagination, I took off my large black hat, and using it for a shield, began to thrust it toward his gaping jaws. My ruse had the desired effect, for, after springing at me a few times, he wheeled about and trotted off several paces, and stopped to gaze at me. Being apprehensive that he might change his mind and return to the attack, and conscious that, under the compromise, I had the best of the bargain, I very resolutely took to my heels, glad of the opportunity of making a draw game, though I had myself given the challenge."

Gregg devotes considerable space to a discussion of the aborigines of America, and among these he mentions most of the prairie tribes. He speaks at some length of what we now call the civilized tribes—that is to say, the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles. He notes the dreadful evil that liquor has created among the Indians, and gives, at the same time, a somewhat amusing account of the Legislative Council among the Choctaws, where whiskey was banished from the nation: "Many and long were the speeches which were made, and much enthusiasm was created against the monster 'whiskey,' and all his brood of compound enormities. Still every one seemed loth to move his arrest and execution. Finally, a captain of more than ordinary temerity arose, and offered a resolution that each and every individual who should thenceforth dare to introduce any of the liquid curse

into their country, should be punished with a hundred lashes on his bare back, and the liquor be poured out. This was passed, after some slight changes, by acclamation; but, with a due sense of the injustice of ex-post-facto restrictions, all those who had liquors on hand were permitted to sell them. The council adjourned; but the members soon began to canvass among each other the pernicious consequences which might result from the protracted use of the whiskey already in the shops, and therefore concluded the quicker it was drank up the more promptly would the evil be over: so, falling to, in less than two hours Bacchus never mustered a drunker troop than were these same temperance legislators. The consequences of their determination were of lasting importance to them. The law, with some slight improvements, has ever since been rigorously enforced."

It is interesting to note that the Comanches, while bitterly at war with the Mexicans and the Texans, for very many years, nevertheless, cultivated peace with the New Mexicans, "not only because the poverty of the country offers fewer inducements for their inroads, but because it is desirable, as with the interior Mexican tribes, to retain some friendly point with which to keep an amicable intercourse and traffic. Parties of them have therefore sometimes entered the settlements of New Mexico for trading purposes; while every season numerous bands of New Mexicans, known as Comancheros, supplied with arms, ammunition, trinkets, provisions, and other necessities, launch upon the prairies

to barter for mules, and the different fruits of their ravages upon the south."

Gregg's history of these first beginnings of the westward commerce of the United States is a most valuable and interesting repository of the facts of the period. It purports to be only a diary of a trader, but actually it is history.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### SAMUEL PARKER

**I**N the year 1838 there was published in Ithaca, N. Y., by the author, the *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains, Under the Direction of the A. B. C. F. M., Performed in the Years 1835, '36, and '37; Containing a Description of the Geography, Geology, Climate, and Productions; and the Number, Manners, and Customs of the Natives. With a Map of Oregon Territory.* By Rev. Samuel Parker, A.M.

As may be imagined from this title, Mr. Parker was a missionary whose business in setting out into the wild West was to spread the Gospel. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent him out to ascertain by personal observation the condition and character of the Indian nations and tribes, and the opportunities for introducing the Gospel and civilization among them. He writes in a more or less ponderous style, and his mind is dominated, as is natural, by the missionary idea, to such an extent that his book at times even has something of the flavor of some of the volumes of the *Jesuit Relations*.

At St. Louis Mr. Parker met Dr. Marcus Whitman,



appointed by the American Board to be his associate in his western explorations, and here the two missionaries waited for a time until the caravan which they were to accompany should be ready to start.

Dr. Whitman's name is so closely connected with the securing of Oregon Territory by the United States that it is hardly necessary to speak of him at any length.

Before leaving Liberty, Mo., the steamer on which they were travelling broke down, and it became necessary to proceed overland, and they reached Fort Leavenworth early in May, 1835. During the journey Parker met with a number of men who, at various times, had had close intercourse with the Wichitas or Pawnee Picts, Comanches, Navajoes, and Apaches; and from all these individuals he heard accounts which made him think well of these wild and distant tribes, and of their adaptability to Christianity and to civilized pursuits. He was observant, too, of the local Indians—Iowas, Sacs, and Foxes—and was favorably impressed by all.

After reaching Council Bluffs there was a long wait before the caravan set out on its western journey. Much is said of the Indians inhabiting this region, Yanktons, Omahas, Poncas, and the more distant Mandans; and some hints are given as to the mode of life of these tribes. The party travelled up the Platte, meeting the usual difficulties and discouragements attendant on the stormy weather in summer. Much of the time they were drenched to the skin. Occasionally a storm of hail would come, which scattered their

animals, and much time was devoted to gathering them again. Travelling westward, the two Campbells and Sublette, with a few men, were met returning from the Black Hills.

The apparently fertile bottom lands of the Platte, over which they were travelling, greatly impressed the missionary, who prophesied concerning it as follows: "No country could be more inviting to the farmer, with only one exception—the want of woodland. The latitude is sufficiently high to be healthy; and as the climate grows warmer as we travel west, until we approach the snow-topped mountains, there is a degree of mildness not experienced east of the Alleghany Mountains. The time will come, and probably is not far distant, when this country will be covered with a dense population. The earth was created for the habitation of man, and for a theatre on which God will manifest his perfections in his moral government among his moral creatures, and therefore the earth, according to divine prediction, shall be given to the people of God. Although infidels may sneer, and scoffers mock, yet God will accomplish His designs and fulfill every promise contained in His Word. Then this amazing extent of most fertile land will not continue to be the wandering ground of a few thousand Indians, with only a very few acres under cultivation; nor will millions of tons of grass grow up to rot upon the ground, or to be burned up with the fire enkindled to sweep over the prairie, to disincumber it of its spontaneous burden. The herds of buffalo which once fattened upon these meadows

are gone; and the deer which once cropped the grass have disappeared; and the antelopes have fled away; and shall solitude reign here till the end of time? No: here shall be heard the din of business, and the church-going bell shall sound far and wide."

Before long the travellers reached the Loup Fork, which they crossed; and here they met a number of Pawnee Indians, who treated them with great courtesy and kindness, and invited them to feast with them. Reference is made here to Messrs. Dunbar and Allis, and to the missionary work that they were doing among the Pawnees.

From the Pawnee country the party kept on up the Platte, through the open country. Here, it seems, those Indians most feared were the Arickaras, not the Sioux and Cheyennes, as was the case thirty years later. At this time that tribe was said to have gone far up the south fork of the Platte to avoid the United States dragoons, under command of Colonel Dodge, who was pursuing them. As Parker's party went up the north fork of the Platte, he speaks of "their using particular caution to be prepared for an attack of the Arickaras, should any of their war parties be about us. Every man was required to see that his rifle was in good order, and to have a good supply of powder and balls. We all slept with our clothes on, so that, if called with the sentinels' fire, we might in less than a moment be ready for action."

Here is a word about the animals that they saw next day as they journeyed on:

"Saw, on the 16th, the buffalo in great numbers, and in nearer view than previously. They are less shy than those we first found. They are more majestic than the elk, but less beautiful. The antelopes, some of which we have seen for several days past, are becoming very numerous. They are rightly named, for their speed exceeds any animal I have ever seen. Our hounds can do nothing in giving them the chase; so soon are they left far in the rear, that they do not follow them more than ten or twenty rods before they return, looking ashamed of their defeat. Our hunters occasionally take some of them by coming upon them by stealth. When they are surprised, they start forward a very small space, and then turn, and with high-lifted heads stare for a few seconds at the object which has alarmed them, and then, with a half whistling snuff, bound off, seeming to be as much upon wings as upon feet. They resemble the goat, but are far more beautiful."

Court House Rock, Chimney Rock, and Scott's Bluffs were duly passed. Some very friendly Ogallallahs were met with just before they reached the Laramie River. Their camp that night was close to the fort. Here took place one of the days of revelry and carousing which are so frequently noted in these old books as occurring periodically. There were dances by the Indians, and other celebrations. Keeping on up the Platte, they passed Independence Rock August 7th, and reached the Sweetwater. The weather was now growing colder, and ice often made during the night.

On reaching Green River they came to the rendezvous



TRAPPERS ATTACKED BY INDIANS.



of the American Fur Company. Who was in command Parker does not tell us; but that various well-known persons were present is certain. For example, "While we continued in this place, Dr. Whitman was called to perform some very important surgical operations; he extracted an iron arrow three inches long from the back of Captain Bridger, which he had received in a skirmish three years before with the Blackfeet Indians. It was a difficult operation, in consequence of the arrow being hooked at the point by striking a large bone, and a cartilaginous substance had grown around it. The Dr. pursued the operation with great self-possession and perseverance, and Captain Bridger manifested equal firmness. The Indians looked on while the operation was proceeding with countenances indicating wonder, and when they saw the arrow, expressed their astonishment in a manner peculiar to themselves. The skill of Dr. Whitman undoubtedly made upon them a favorable impression. He also took another arrow from under the shoulder of one of the hunters which had been there two years and a half."

Here Parker consulted the Flatheads and Nez Percés, asking them if they would be willing to receive a minister of the Gospel. They needed no persuasion, but agreed to allow him to come to them, and so cordial was their response, that it seemed best that Dr. Whitman should return with the caravan, enlist some more workers, and return the next year with another caravan, to establish a mission among these people. Dr. Whitman at first was unwilling to leave his fellow missionary to go on alone, but finally did so.



During another day of drunkenness a fight took place at the rendezvous. "A hunter, who goes technically by the name of the great bully of the mountains, mounted his horse with a loaded rifle, and challenged any Frenchman, American, Spaniard or Dutchman to fight him in single combat. Kit Carson, an American, told him if he wished to die, he would accept the challenge. Shunar defied him. Carson mounted his horse, and with a loaded pistol rushed into close contact, and both almost at the same instant fired. Carson's ball entered Shunar's hand, came out at the wrist, and passed through the arm above the elbow. Shunar's ball passed over the head of Carson, and while he went for another pistol, Shunar begged that his life might be spared."

Parker had arranged to travel on with the Flatheads. The chief of these gave him a young man as an assistant, and Parker secured a voyageur who understood English and Nez Percé. Parker and his Indian friends started, August 21, in company with Bridger, whose way led in the same direction as theirs. Bridger had about fifty men. They followed up the stream to Jackson's Hole, and encamped on a small stream which the author says is one of the upper branches of the Columbia River. He says something about the difficulties of travel and the narrow passages which it was necessary to traverse, and which he calls "kenyans." This term is found more or less frequently in these old books by persons who seem to have written it down only from hearing the word spoken. Near Jackson's Hole he climbed one of the high mountains, and was greatly impressed by what he saw. One day while travelling

through the mountains "a number of buffalo, which were pursued by our Indians, came rushing down the side of the mountain through the midst of our company. One ran over a horse, on the back of which was a child, and threw the child far down the descent, but it providentially was not materially injured. Another ran over a packed horse and wounded it deeply in the shoulders."

Mr. Parker evidently enjoyed the companionship of the Indians, whom he seems to have regarded with most pleasant feelings. He says: "The Indians are very kind to each other, and if one meets with any disaster, the others will wait and assist him. Their horses often turn their packs and run, plunge and kick, until they free themselves from their burdens. Yesterday a horse turned his saddle under him upon which a child was fastened, and started to run, but those near hovered at once around with their horses so as to inclose the one to which the child was attached, and it was extricated without hurt. When I saw the condition of the child, I had no expectation that it could be saved alive."

A little later, still speaking of the children, he says of the Indians: "They are so well supplied with horses that every man, woman and child are mounted on horseback, and all they have is packed upon horses. Small children, not more than three years old, are mounted alone, and generally upon colts. They are lashed upon the saddle to keep them from falling, and especially when they go asleep, which they often do when they become fatigued. Then they recline upon the horse's shoulders;

and when they awake, they lay hold of their whip, which is fastened to the wrist of their right hand, and apply it smartly to their horses; and it is astonishing to see how these little creatures will guide and run them. Children which are still younger are put into an encasement made with a board at the back, and a wicker-work around the other parts, covered with cloth inside and without, or more generally with dressed skins; and they are carried upon the mother's back, or suspended from a high nob upon the fore part of their saddles."

Still moving westward, early in September they met a band of Nez Percés. They came to Parker's camp about the middle of the day, "the principal chief marching in front with his aid, carrying an American flag by his side. They all sung a march, while a few beat a sort of drum. As they drew near, they displayed columns, and made quite an imposing appearance. The women and children followed in the rear."

The next day's diary is devoted almost entirely to an account of missionary work, in which the author gives an extract of the various sermons that he preached to the Indians, who received his teachings with great patience and interest. By this time the party was out of provisions, and all were getting hungry, but no game was seen. However, on September 9, buffalo were viewed, and preparations were made to chase them. All the best hunters chose their swiftest horses, and seeing that their arms were in good order, made ready for the run; while Parker did what he could by lifting up "my heart in prayer to God, that He would give them

judgment, skill and success. They advanced toward the herd of buffalo with great caution, lest they should frighten them before they should make a near approach; and also to reserve the power of their horses for the chase when it should be necessary to bring it into full requisition. When the buffalo took the alarm and fled, the rush was made, each Indian selecting for himself a cow with which he happened to come into the nearest contact. All were in swift motion scouring the valley; a cloud of dust began to arise, firing of guns and shooting of arrows followed in close succession; soon here and there buffalo were seen prostrated, and the women, who followed close in the rear, began the work of securing the valuable acquisition, and the men were away again in pursuit of the fleeing herd. Those in the chase when as near as two rods shoot and wheel, expecting the wounded animal to turn upon them. The horses appeared to understand the way to avoid danger. As soon as the wounded animal flies again, the chase is renewed, and such is the alternate wheeling and chasing until the buffalo sinks beneath its wounds. They obtained between fifty and sixty, which was a signal mercy."

Not long after this, the Nez Percés and Flatheads left them, wishing to remain in the buffalo range to secure their winter's meat. Before going away, however, they presented Parker with twenty tongues and a large quantity of dried meat. About a hundred and fifty of the Indians kept on down Salmon River with the missionaries; and not long afterward they had a tremendous

Indian scare, supposing that they were about to be attacked by the Blackfeet. A little investigation, however, showed that what had been seen were buffalo, and not Blackfeet, and food again became plenty in the camp.

Parker appears to have been a man of considerable attainments. He remarks upon the geology of the region he passes through; enumerates the birds and mammals which he sees, and has much to say about the habits and characteristics of the Indians; and interspersed through all are frequent references to the Deity, His wishes and purposes as interpreted by the missionary, together with earnest aspirations for the spread of the Gospel among the red people.

Walla Walla was reached early in October, and there, at the post of the Hudson's Bay Company, Parker was received by Mr. Pambrun with great hospitality. For this the guest was very grateful, and he says many good words concerning the kindly people and the company which they represented; words which are not only good but true.

After a day or two of rest at Walla Walla, the missionary started down the river in a canoe with three Walla Walla Indians, and before long stopped at a camp of Cayuse Indians, with whom, however, he was unable to communicate. He noticed that all along the river as he passed, the Indians, though of different tribes, seemed to be on good terms with one another, a condition which was inevitable from the fact that all these Indians drew their support from the river, to which

they resorted for salmon, and coming there for provisions, could not have afforded to fight, even had they wished to.

At the Dalles, Parker met Captain Wyeth, from Boston, with whom, it will be remembered, Townsend and Nuttall had journeyed westward the year before. A little above the Cascades he met the first Chenooks, which he denominates "the only real Flatheads and Nez Percés, or pierced noses, I have found. They flatten their heads and pierce their noses. The flattening of their heads is not so great a deformity as is generally supposed. From a little above the eyes to the apex or crown of the head there is a depression, but not generally in adult persons very noticeable. The piercing of the nose is more of a deformity, and is done by inserting two small tapering white shells, about two inches long, somewhat in the shape of a thorn, through the lower part of the cartilaginous division of the nose." While following the trail along the river, he came to a pleasant rise of ground, upon which were several houses of a forsaken village, which were both larger and far better than any he had hitherto seen in any Indian country. They were about sixty feet long and thirty-five wide, the frame work very well constructed, and covered with split planks and cedar bark. These houses thus greatly resemble those seen in recent times on the coast of portions of British Columbia. The next day Mr. Parker reached Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay post, where Dr. J. McLaughlin, a chief factor of the company, received him very kindly. From here Parker went on down the



river, and reached the brig "May Dacre," of Boston, belonging to the Wyeth Company. Here he met Dr. Townsend, and before long they set sail down the river, and reached Astoria, the far-famed New York of the West.

The Indians of the country beyond the Continental Divide through which Parker passed, he divides into those of the plains, which live in the upper country from the falls of the Columbia to the Rocky Mountains, and those of the lower country, between the shores of the Pacific and the falls of the Columbia River. He observes that the first of these divisions are remarkable for their cleanliness; that they are well supplied with horses, which are very cheap, a good horse selling for not more than enough to purchase a blanket or a few small articles of merchandise. As to their habits, he declares that the Indians of the plains are not lazy, as they are commonly supposed to be, for he rarely saw any of those Indians without their being engaged in some pursuit. To him the Indians appeared as they since have to others—not especially different from other people. They have the same natural propensities, and the same social affections. "They are cheerful and often gay, sociable, kind and affectionate; and anxious to receive instruction in whatever may conduce to their happiness here or hereafter." They have but few manufactures, and those are the most plain and simple.

He calls attention to the fact that these Indians have no wars among themselves, and appear averse to all wars, not entering into battle except in self-defence.



Their only enemies are the Blackfoot Indians, whose country is along the east border of the Rocky Mountains, and who are constantly roaming about in parties on both sides of the mountains in quest of plunder. When the Indians on the West side meet with these war parties they endeavor to avoid an encounter, but if compelled to fight, "show a firm, undaunted, unconquerable spirit, and rush upon their enemies with the greatest impetuosity." When an enemy is discovered, every horse is driven into camp, and the women take charge of them, while every man seizes his weapons, mounts his horse, and waits, firm and undismayed, to see if hostilities must ensue. Very frequently when the Blackfeet see white men with the Nez Percés and Flatheads, they decline battle, even though they themselves may be far superior in numbers, for they know that the white man can furnish a large supply of ammunition on such occasions. The Nez Percé or Flathead chief will accept the pipe, explaining as he does so that he knows the Blackfeet mean war, although they pretend peace.

The Indians were great gamblers, especially at running horses and in foot-races. Drunkenness was a vice as yet strange to these Indians, but Parker predicted that it would come to them so soon as it was possible to transport liquor to them. He describes the method of doctoring by a medicine man, and the practice of the sudatory or sweat bath. All this is of the plains Indians.

Those of the lower country are of less attractive type than the others. As their subsistence depends almost

entirely on fish, they are less well clad, for they have not the same opportunity to obtain skins as the people of the buffalo country. Liquor had been brought into the lower country, and the Indians were slaves to it.

These Indians believe in the immortality of the soul, and that in the future state we shall have the same wants as in this life. Thus, in 1829, the wife of an influential chief of the Chenooks, near Cape Disappointment, killed two female slaves, which should attend her child to the world of spirits, and especially should row her canoe to the Happy Hunting Ground in the South.

As the wealth of the upper Indians is estimated in their horses, so those of the lower country count their property by the number of their wives, slaves, and canoes. Special attention is called to the excellent canoes which they make, and also to the baskets woven so closely as to hold water, and to be used for pails. Of course, they were also used as pots in which to cook fish and mush.

After having spent the winter on the Columbia, Parker set out in May to revisit the Nez Percés. He reached them in a short time, and, as it happened, came to a village just as a little child was being buried. The Indians had prepared a cross to be set up at the grave, very likely having been taught to do so by some Iroquois Indians, of whom there were not a few trapping in the country; and here appears the bigotry of the missionary of that, and indeed of later days as well, for Parker says: "But as I viewed a cross of wood made by men's hands, of no avail to benefit either the dead or the living, and far

more likely to operate as a salve to a guilty conscience, or a stepping stone to idolatry, than to be understood in its spiritual sense to refer to the crucifixion of our sins, I took this, which the Indians had prepared, and broke it to pieces. I then told them we place a stone at the head and foot of the grave only to mark the place; and without a murmur they cheerfully acquiesced, and adopted our custom."

Parker appears to have regarded the Nez Percé Indians as especially adapted to conversion, and laments that he is unable to speak their language, and thus to communicate with them directly. Parker was an active and conscientious person, and evidently wished to see all he could of the country to which he had been sent. He set out from the Nez Percés for the Colville country, meeting Spokanes, Cayuses, Cœur d'Alenes, and a number of other small tribes. Returning, he was unable to get transportation down the Columbia River, and was obliged to take horses for Fort Okanagan. The journey was long and very dry, and the party suffered more or less from thirst. At Fort Okanagan he took a boat to run down the river four hundred miles to Walla Walla, which he reached in safety. Toward the end of June he took ship for the Sandwich Islands, and in December, 1836, sailed on board the "Phoenix" for his home in the East. After a stormy passage he reached New London, May 18, and five days later, after two years and two months of absence, and journeyings which covered twenty-eight thousand miles, arrived at his home at Ithaca, N. Y.

## CHAPTER XXIV

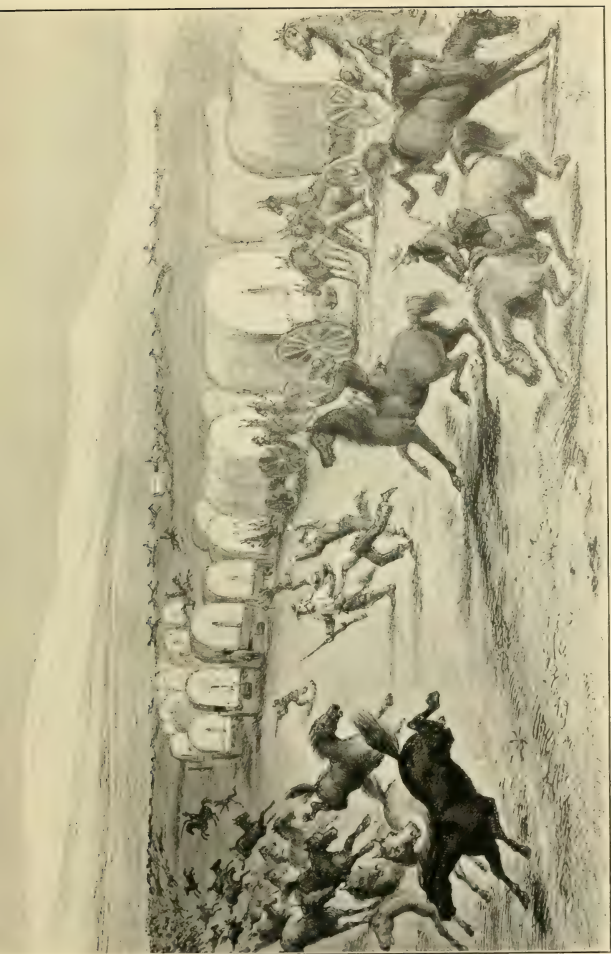
THOMAS J. FARNHAM

### I

**A** CURIOUS little book, the title-page of which bears the date 1841, is Thomas J. Farnham's, *Travels in the Great Western Prairies, The Anahuac and Rocky Mountains, And in The Oregon Territory*. It was published in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., by Killey & Lossing, printers. It contains nearly two hundred pages, and is printed in very fine type, and on thin paper, with small margins; so that in fact it looks more like a tract than a volume. Yet it contains about a hundred and twenty thousand words.

Its title indicates the character of the book. It is the narrative of a journey made in order to obtain "a view of the Great Prairie Wilderness, the Rocky Mountains, and the sweet vales of the Oregon Territory."

Farnham was one of a party of fourteen men who left Peoria, Ill., on the first day of May, 1839. The company was followed by a wagon containing their provisions, ammunition, and other baggage, and each man carried "a rifle swung at his back; a powder horn, bullet pouch and long knife at his side."



TRAIN STAMPEDED BY WILD HORSES.

From Bartlett's *Texas, New Mexico, California, etc.*



Their way westward was marked by no adventure, except the usual ones of travel on the prairie; but at Quincy the author met Joe Smith, Jr., the father of the Mormon prophet, and he interrupts his narrative to give a somewhat extended account of Mormonism and the history of the Latter Day Saints up to that time. From Quincy they passed on to Independence, Mo., twenty days out from their starting point. Here the travellers beheld a sight novel to them—the breaking of green mules to harness; and after some time devoted to loitering about Independence, and making preparations for their journey, they started westward in a storm.

Farnham's party followed the track of the Santa Fé traders, and, like others who passed over this road, they met with the Kauzaus (Kansas) Indians, whom they saw and wondered at. Early in the trip, near the Osage River, the members of Farnham's company began to weary of prairie life, and three of his best men determined to return to the "States," and left him. The journey continued along the Santa Fé trail, but provisions began to grow short. Game was seen from time to time, but none was killed. Continual storms drenched them, wet their packs and their ropes, and made life more or less of a burden to them. At last, however, in the latter half of June, they came to the buffalo range, overtaking there a party of Santa Fé traders.

Buffalo now began to be found, and the party killed their first one, "a noble bull; a mountain of flesh weighing at least three thousand pounds." This relieved their necessities, but they were anxious, because of the



prospect of soon meeting Indians—Caws, Pawnees, or Comanches, or all three. And now, to make things worse, one of the men of the party accidentally shot himself with his own rifle. For a day or two he was carried in one of the wagons belonging to the Santa Fé caravan, but presently Farnham's party turned off from this trail, and then the wounded man was obliged either to ride a horse or travel in a litter. Experiment soon showed, however, that the last method of travelling was impracticable, and it was necessary for the man to ride. His wound became inflamed and painful, but the constant care of the author made life much easier for the wounded man. "June 23, the buffalo were more numerous than ever. They were ranged in long lines from the eastern to the western horizon. The bulls were forty or fifty yards in advance of the bands of cows, to which they severally intended to give protection. And as the moving embankment of wagons, led by an advanced guard, and flanked by horsemen riding slowly from front to rear, and guarded in the rear by men, made its majestic way along, these fiery cavaliers would march each to his own band of dames and misses, with an air that seemed to say, 'we are here'; and then back again to their lines, with great apparent satisfaction, that they were able to do battle for their sweet ones and their native plains." Farnham says that during three days they passed over a country so completely covered by buffalo that it appeared oftentimes dangerous even for the immense cavalcade of the Santa Fé traders to attempt to break its way through them. He figures that they travelled

over one thousand three hundred and fifty square miles of territory so thickly covered with buffalo that, when viewed from a height, it scarcely afforded a sight of a square league of its surface. Soon after this, disaffection showed itself in the ranks of Farnham's company, and it was proposed to abandon the wounded man, the mutineers declaring that he would die in any event, and that it was not worth while to delay the whole party to await that event.

Now, too, a jealousy as to the command arose. There was a bully who determined to frighten Farnham into abdicating the leadership of the party in his favor.

At last they reached Fort William, or Bent's Fort, on the Arkansas, and on account of the differences which had sprung up within the party, it was decided to disband here. The property owned in common was to be divided up among the members of the expedition, and they were to go their several ways. As it turned out, Farnham and a few others went on together.

"Fort William," he says, "is owned by three brothers by the name of Bent, from St. Louis. Two of them were at the post when we arrived there. They seemed to be thoroughly initiated into Indian life; dressed like chiefs; in moccasins, thoroughly garnished with beads and porcupine quills; in trousers of deerskin, with long fringes of the same extending along the outer seam from the ankle to the hip; in the splendid hunting shirt of the same material, with sleeves fringed on the elbow-seam from the wrist to the shoulder, and ornamented with figures of porcupine quills of various colors, and leathern

fringe around the lower edge of the body. And chiefs they were in the authority exercised in their wild and lonely fortress."

The country in which the fort was situated was then the common hunting-ground of several buffalo tribes, unfriendly alike to one another and the whites. The Utaws and Cheyennes, the Pawnees and the Comanches gathered here in summer to hunt the buffalo; and thus, in the neighborhood of the post, there might be from fifteen to twenty thousand savages, "ready and panting for plunder and blood." If the Indians engaged in fighting had their own battles among themselves, the people of Bent's Fort felt safe; but if the Indians kept the peace among themselves, there was great anxiety at Fort William.

"Instances of the daring intrepidity of the Comanches that occurred just before and after my arrival here, will serve to show the hazard and dangers of which I have spoken. About the middle of June, 1839, a band of sixty of them under cover of night crossed the river and concealed themselves among the bushes that grow thickly on the bank near the place where the animals of the establishment feed during the day. No sentinel being on duty at the time, their presence was unobserved, and when morning came the Mexican horse guard mounted his horse, and with the noise and shouting usual with that class of servants when so employed, rushed his charge out of the fort; and riding rapidly from side to side of the rear of the band, urged them on, and soon had them nibbling the short dry grass in the little vale

within grape-shot distance of the guns of the bastions. It is customary for a guard of animals about these trading posts to take his station beyond his charge; and if they stray from each other, or attempt to stroll too far, he drives them together, and thus keeps them in the best possible situation to be driven hastily to the corral, should the Indians, or other evil persons, swoop down upon them. And as there is constant danger of this, his horse is held by a long rope, and grazes around him, that he may be mounted quickly at the first alarm for a retreat within the walls. The faithful guard at Bent's, on the morning of the disaster I am relating, had dismounted after driving out his animals, and sat upon the ground watching with the greatest fidelity for every call of duty; when these fifty or sixty Indians sprang from their hiding places, ran upon the animals, yelling horribly, and attempted to drive them across the river. The guard, however, nothing daunted, mounted quickly, and drove his horse at full speed among them. The mules and horses hearing his voice amidst the frightening yells of the savages, immediately started at a lively pace for the fort; but the Indians were on all sides and bewildered them. The guard still pressed them onward and called for help: and on they rushed, despite the efforts of the Indians to the contrary. The battlements were covered with men. They shouted encouragement to the brave guard—'Onward! onward!' and the injunction was obeyed. He spurred his horse to his greatest speed from side to side, and whipped the hindmost of the band with his leading rope. He had saved every

animal; he was within twenty yards of the open gate; he fell; three arrows from the bows of the Comanches had cloven his heart. And relieved of him, the lords of the quiver gathered their prey, and drove them to the borders of Texas, without injury to life or limb. I saw this faithful guard's grave. He had been buried a few days. The wolves had been digging into it. Thus forty or fifty mules and horses and their best servant's life, were lost to the Messrs. Bent in a single day. I have been informed also that those horses and mules, which my company had taken great pleasure in recovering for them in the plains, were also stolen in a similar manner soon after my departure from the post; and that the gentlemen owners were in hourly expectation of an attack upon the fort itself."

It was midsummer when Farnham left Fort William, with four companions, for Oregon Territory. He stopped at Fort El Puebla, five miles above Bent's Fort, and here met a number of trappers. One of these greatly impressed him, a man from New Hampshire. "He had been educated at Dartmouth College, and was, altogether, one of the most remarkable men I ever knew. A splendid gentleman, a finished scholar, a critic on English and Roman literature, a politician, a trapper, an Indian." Dressed in a deer-skin frock, leggings and moccasins; there was not a shred of cloth about his person. Stiff, cold, and formal at first, he thawed as their acquaintance grew, and gave Farnham glimpses into his nature which greatly interested the traveller. There were other men among these trap-

pers, who told the author tales of adventure which he gladly set down, and which are well worth reproducing did space permit. Here Farnham traded for additional horses, and before long they set out to cross the mountains.

Led by a trapper named Kelly, who was familiar with the country through which they were to go, the party followed up the Arkansas, and at last entered the Rocky Mountains. Before they had gone very far their way seemed barred by mountains impracticable for pack-horses; yet their guides, after considering the way, marched straight onward over mountains of which some notion may be had from the following description: "The upper half, though less steep, proved to be the worst part of the ascent. It was a bed of rocks, at one place small and rolling, at another large and fixed, with deep openings between them. So that our animals were almost constantly falling, and tottering upon the brink of the cliffs, as they rose again and made their way among them. An hour and a half of this most dangerous and tiresome clambering deposited us in a grove of yellow pines near the summit. Our animals were covered with sweat and dirt, and trembled as if at that instant from the race track. Nor were their masters free from every ill of weariness. Our knees smote each other with fatigue, as Belshazzar's did with fear. Many of the pines on this ridge were two feet in diameter, and a hundred feet high, with small clusters of limbs around the tops. Others were low, and clothed with strong limbs quite near the ground. Under a number of these latter we



had seated ourselves, holding the reins of our riding horses, when a storm arose with the rapidity of a whirlwind, and poured upon us hail and rain and snow with all imaginable liberality. A most remarkable tempest was this. . . . One portion of it had gathered its electricity and mist around James' Peak in the east; another among the white heights northwest; and a third among the snowy pyramids of the Utaws in the southwest; and marshalling their hosts, met over this connecting ridge between the eastern and central ranges, as if by general battle to settle a vexed question as to the better right to the pass; and it was sublimely fought. The opposing storms met nearly at the zenith, and fiercely rolled together their angry masses. And as if to carry out the simile I have here attempted, at the moment of their junction, the electricity of each leaped upon its antagonist transversely across the heavens, and in some instances fell in immense bolts upon the trembling cliffs; and then instantly came a volley of hail as grape-shot, sufficient to whiten all the towers of this horrid war. It lasted an hour."

After the tempest had ceased they clambered to the summit—whence they had a marvellous view of the Great Main snowy range of the "Rocky," "Stony" or "Shining" mountains—then, clambering down on the other side, they camped not far below, on the headwaters of the Platte River, in what is now North Park, Colorado. Food was scarce, and nothing had been killed since they left Fort William; but when they came in sight of the Bayou Salade, Kelly promised them that before



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long they would have meat; and sure enough, during the day a buffalo was seen, killed by the guide, and greedily devoured. A hearty meal of its flesh; tongue, fat ribs, tenderloin, marrow-bones, and blood-pudding were all enjoyed, and the party ate almost the whole night long.

## CHAPTER XXV

THOMAS J. FARNHAM

### II

THEY were now in the country of the Utes, or rather, in the debatable land visited for hunting purposes by Utes, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Shoshoni, Blackfeet, and Crows. They therefore travelled with some care, put out their fires at night, looked to their arms, and prepared to meet the foe. No Indians were seen, however; but another misfortune visited them in the loss of one of the guide's horses, poisoned by some food that it had eaten.

As they journeyed on, food again became scarce, and the travel was so difficult that they had no time to hunt, and suffered from hunger. On the Little Bear River they met a party of four French Canadians, who a few days before had been attacked by a Sioux war party on Little Snake River [of Colorado]. Here again attention is called to the difference in character of the French and the American trappers. The former are mercurial, volatile, and always merry, cheering themselves on their journeys with song; while the American trapper is watchfulness personified, and his concentration in this

direction destroys all frivolity. "They seldom smile; the expression of their countenances is watchful, solemn and determined. They ride and walk like men whose breasts have so long been exposed to the bullet and arrow, that fear finds within them no resting place. If a horseman is descried in the distance, they put spurs to their animals and are at his side at once, as the result may be for death or life. No delay, no second thought, no cringing in their stirrups; but erect, firm, and with a strong arm, they seize and overcome every danger 'or perish,' say they, 'as white men should,' fighting promptly and bravely."

On parting next day—August 5—with the French and American trappers, two of Farnham's party left him. Farnham notes the kindness and free-handedness of the trappers. He had given them a little ammunition, and they sought to repay the kindness by presenting him and his party with moccasins, dressed deer and elk skins, and other articles. "Everything, even their hunting shirts upon their backs, were at our service; always kindly remarking when they made an offer of such things, that 'the country was filled with skins, and they could get a supply when they should need them.'" It was this same day that a man, pursuing some bears, found among the brush a prize—an excellent pack-mule, feeding quietly, and so tame as to permit him to approach within ten yards of it without even raising its head. The man prepared to catch it, when suddenly the mule "most wonderfully, most cruelly, metamorphosed itself into an elk!—fat as marrow itself, and sufficient in weight to have

fed our company for twelve days—and fled away,” the man who had prepared to catch it being too astonished to shoot at it. This was unlucky, for now they had no food. Game was seen several times, but none was killed. The next day, however, a family of bears was seen, and two cubs secured. They weighed about twelve pounds apiece, and made for the party, as the author expresses it, “a filthy supper.” They were trying to reach Brown’s Hole, but progress was slow. For forty-eight hours after the finishing of the cubs they had no food; and then, with great regret, they killed their dog, singed and ate it. At last, after more days of hunger, they found themselves in Brown’s Hole, and at Fort David Crockett.

Here there was food and to spare, and white men, traders, especially one Robinson, who traded chiefly with the Snakes. This was very likely “Uncle Jack Robinson,” who died, a very old man, at Fort Bridger about 1894. He was one of the party of trappers who found the Arapahoe baby whom they named Friday.

In this “Happy Valley,” which, however, was not free from incursions by the wandering enemy, the travellers spent much time, and here Farnham puts down some things that he learned concerning the Snake, Crow, Blackfeet, and Arapahoe Indians. He describes especially the pestilence which visited the Blackfeet in 1828, at which time they numbered about two thousand five hundred lodges, or families, which would perhaps mean twelve thousand five hundred people. This enumeration may perhaps refer to the Piegan Black-

feet alone, or to all three of the tribes of that nation.

At that time, as in later visits of this dread disease, the Blackfeet treatment was by the sweat lodge, followed by a plunge into icy water, from which often the weakened victim was unable to struggle again to the shore. At this time the Blackfoot camp, it is said, was on the banks of the Yellowstone.

A glimpse of the estimation in which the Blackfeet were held in those days is afforded by the reflection with which the author concludes his description of this scourge; for he says: "But this infliction has in no wise humanized their blood-thirsty nature. As ever before, they wage exterminating war upon the traders and trappers, and the Oregon Indians."

At Brown's Hole, Farnham met an old Snake Indian who had seen Lewis and Clark on the headwaters of the Missouri in 1805. This man was the first of his people who saw the exploring white man. "He appears to have been galloping from place to place in the office of sentinel to the Shoshoni camp, when he suddenly found himself in the very presence of the whites. Astonishment fixed him to the spot. Men with faces pale as ashes had never been seen by himself or his nation. 'The head rose high and round, the top flat; it jutted over the eyes in a thin rim; their skin was loose and flowing, and of various colors.' His fears at length overcoming his curiosity, he fled in the direction of the Indian encampment. But being seen by the whites they pursued and brought him to their camp; exhibited to

him the effects of their firearms, loaded him with presents, and let him go. Having arrived among his own people, he told them he had seen men with faces pale as ashes, who were makers of thunder, lightning, etc. This information astounded the whole tribe. They had lived many years, and their ancestors had lived many more, and there were many legends which spoke of many wonderful things; but a tale like this they had never heard. A council was therefore assembled to consider the matter. The man of strange words was summoned before it; and he rehearsed, in substance, what he had before told to others, but was not believed. 'All men were red, and therefore he could not have seen men as pale as ashes. The Great Spirit made the thunder and lightning; he therefore could not have seen men of any color that could produce them. He had seen nothing; he had lied to his chief, and should die.' At this stage of the proceedings, the culprit produced some of the presents which he had received from the pale men. These being quite as new to them as pale faces were, it was determined 'that he should have the privilege of leading his judges to the place where he declared he had seen these strange people; and if such were found there, he should be exculpated; if not, these presents were to be considered as conclusive evidence against him, that he dealt with evil spirits, and that he was worthy of death by the arrows of his kinfolks.' The pale men—the thunder makers—were found, and were witnesses of the poor fellow's story. He was released, and has ever since been much honored and loved

by his tribe, and every white man in the mountains. He is now about eighty years old, and poor. But as he is always about Fort David Crockett, he is never permitted to want."

At Brown's Hole arrived Paul Richardson, who was returning from the borders of Oregon to St. Louis. He had guided some missionaries and others, from the Western States to that unknown region, and among them a man whose purpose it was to conquer the territory of California. The missionaries were Messrs. Munger and Griffith, and their wives were with them. Influenced by Richardson's story, which was very unfavorable to Oregon as a place of residence, two of Farnham's men determined to return to the Mississippi Valley. This left him only Blair, an old man, and the useless person whose life he had saved, as companions for the long journey before him. The event was disheartening. Farnham, however, was a man of determination, and was not to be turned from his purpose of striving, at least, to reach the mouth of the Colorado River that season. He therefore engaged a Snake Indian to pilot him to Fort Hall, about two hundred miles distant; the compensation offered for the service being fifty loads of ammunition, and three bunches of beads. One of the melancholy things of continuing the journey was the necessity of parting with Kelly, the trapper who had bravely and effectively guided them from Fort William to Brown's Hole. When the last farewells were said, they started off, following the Green River, which here is called Sheet-



skadee; and on a tributary of this stream, a day or two later, Farnham lost his Pueblo mare—a prairie, and not a mountain, horse—which, after escaping many dangers in climbing the rough mountains to the eastward, at last fell over a cliff about six hundred feet high and was killed.

When starting out from Fort David Crockett, they had been ill supplied with food, of which a considerable part was dog meat, but Jim, the Indian guide, occasionally killed an antelope, which kept the party from suffering. While still travelling up the river, they met a free trapper, named Madison Gordon, who told them the usual story of few beaver, and little game; and he declared that he purposed to move West, and to begin farming in the valley of the Willamette, which he averred was the purpose also of a large number of his fellow trappers. One morning, as they were packing, the guide detected in the distance, down the river, people coming. Who these might be they did not know. They had visions of war parties of Crows, Sioux, and Blackfeet, and prepared for the attack; put new caps on their rifles, mounted, and took up a favorable position. But before long their guide rode out from behind their brush-wood camp and hurried his horse toward the stranger. This man proved to be the celebrated bear killer, Meek—perhaps the man whose story is told in a book entitled, *The River of the West*, which gives much of the history of the early settlements on the Columbia River. A day or two after this, food must have again become scarce with them, for the

author says, quite incidentally, "at sunset our camp kettle was bubbling over the bones of a pelican at the 'Steamboat Spring.'" Think of the joy of eating boiled pelican! What more nauseous dish can be imagined. Crossing over into the valley of Bear River, they hurried on their way, frequently made uneasy by finding the tracks of people, and even by seeing camp fires at night, and at length reached Fort Hall, and full meals, in which fresh buffalo tongue figured largely.

After a short stay at Fort Hall, Farnham and his people, under the guidance of an Indian, set out to cross the burnt plains of Snake River. Two or three days out the party was joined by a Swiss trapper who had been eight years in the mountains. He had been a student in a seminary, but had deserted that training-ground for the priesthood and had come to America and taken to the mountains.

The wormwood deserts of the Snake River were hard enough on the travellers, but harder still on their animals, which had little to eat. Digger Indians were sometimes met; and when they reached the Boisais River they found Indians in considerable numbers engaged in taking salmon for their winter provisions. They were pleasant, hospitable, and ready to trade provisions, or even horses; and here the party renewed their stock. It was here too that their guide left them, explaining that now that he had come to the country of another people, it would not be good manners to act as guide through their land. Left without guidance in a country cut up with trails, they were obliged to depend on themselves,

but at length succeeded in hiring a number of Bonak [Bannock] Indians to guide them to the fort, which they were now approaching.

The fort at Boisais was as hospitable as all the others had been. This post was built in 1832 by the Hudson's Bay Company to counteract the influence of Wyeth's Fort Hall, the building of which is described in J. K. Townsend's sketches. At this time it was commanded by Mr. Payette. The stay at Boisais was not long, and the travellers moved on over a country sometimes easy to traverse, again extremely difficult. In some places all the party walked, except the worthless Smith, who insisted on making his unfortunate beast carry him over the roughest ground. A few days later they reached the Columbia River, and crossing over found themselves before the mission, in the presence of Dr. Whitman. Mr. Munger and Mr. Hall were also there. A pretty picture is painted of the life and work of this mission among the Skyuse Indians, whom they were endeavoring to teach the ordinary occupations of civilized life.

At the Dalles Farnham saw some Chinooks, and declared that they flattened their heads more and are more stupid than any other tribe on the Columbia.

He tells us that these Indians subsist on the acorns of the white oak and on fish. For winter the fish is dried, and then pounded to powder and mixed with the oil of the leaf fat of the fish, and packed away in flag sacks; thus making a sort of fish pemmican. Although no salt is used in this preparation, it remains good through the winter. The acorns, gathered as soon as they fall to

the ground, are buried in sand, which is kept constantly saturated with water, where they remain till spring. This soaking is said to remove their bitter flavor.

Passing on down the Columbia, Farnham passed various settlements and farms, one of which belonged to Thomas McKay, son of the McKay who figured with John Jacob Astor in the doings of the Pacific Fur Company. McKay was building a grist mill, and it was well advanced toward completion. The mother of McKay was a Cree or Chippewa Indian. This is the McKay spoken of by Townsend.

It was just at this time that the British, as well as the Americans, were beginning to take possession of Oregon, and what is now Washington. It had long been occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company; but, on the other hand, many Americans had traded and settled there; and the American settlers were urgent that they should be protected, declaring this to be a portion of their country's domain. The settlers held a meeting while Farnham was there, and handed him a petition, signed by sixty-seven citizens of the United States, and persons desirous of becoming such, the substance of which was a description of the country, their unprotected situation, and a prayer that the Federal Government would extend over them the protection and institutions of the Republic.

Farnham's original intention was to explore Oregon during the winter then beginning, and during the following summer to return to the States with the American fur traders. Already the rainy season had begun, how-

ever, and it was uncertain whether the traders would return to the States next year. That plan had to be given up. Finally he determined to take ship from the mouth of the Columbia River either for New York or California, as the opportunity might offer.

At Fort Vancouver he found a number of Hudson's Bay people, with whom the time passed very pleasantly. Then, again taking to his canoe, he passed down to the mouth of the river, where he found the good ship "Vancouver," Captain Duncan; and shortly after, passing out to sea, Farnham's travels in the great Anahuac were ended.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### FREMONT

#### I

THE inequality with which fame distributes her favors has always been a fertile subject for moralist and philosopher. One man may do great things, and yet through innate modesty, or ill fortune of some sort, may make no impression on the popular imagination; so that his deeds are soon forgotten. Another, by a series of fortunately narrated adventures of relatively much less difficulty and danger, may acquire the name of having accomplished great things. Zebulon M. Pike, the explorer, was a man of the first kind. John C. Fremont, commonly spoken of as the Pathfinder, and by many people believed to have been the discoverer of the Rocky Mountains, belonged to the second class. The work that Fremont did was good work, but it was not great. He was an army officer, sent out to survey routes across the continent; and he did his duty, and did it well; but he did not discover the Rocky Mountains, nor did he discover gold in California, as often supposed. He passed over routes already well known to the men of the plains and the mountains, and discovered little that was new, except

the approximate location of many points. Nevertheless, in his two expeditons, which cover the years 1842 and 1843, and 1844, he traversed ten thousand miles of wilderness, between the Missouri River and the shores of the Pacific; and he connected the surveys of the State of Missouri with those made by the Wilkes expedition at the mouth of the Columbia. This involved much labor and hardship, and was of high value at the time, but it is not to be compared with the work done by Lewis and Clark, and Pike; and the fact that Fremont gained great fame while his predecessors seemed until recently to be almost forgotten, seems unjust.

Fremont's first expedition went only as far as the Rocky Mountains, terminating at the South Pass and Fremont's Peak. The second, which reached those mountains by another route, crossed them at the South Pass, and proceeded West to the Oregon River—the Columbia—and northern California.

The story of these two journeys is embodied in a report addressed to the Chief of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, and published in Washington in 1845.

Although a formal report, made by an army officer, and written in the ordinary style of an itinerary of the daily march, yet Fremont's account of his travels is told with much vividness; and quite apart from the interest which attaches to it as a description of the still unexplored West, it attracts by its graphic style. The accounts of the hunting, encounters with Indians, and mountain climbing are spirited; and the descriptions of wild scenery show real feeling.





MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN C. FREMONT.



Fremont's party consisted of Charles Preuss, his assistant in topography; L. Maxwell, a hunter, with Kit Carson as guide. L. Maxwell and Kit Carson had long before this both been employed at Bent's old fort—Fort William. They had married sisters, daughters of Mr. Beaubien of Taos, N. M., who a few years later was killed in the Pueblo rising at Taos. He had over twenty Frenchmen, Creoles, and Canadian voyageurs, old prairie men, who had been servants of the fur companies. Among these men are such names as Lambert, L'Esperance, Lefevre, Lajeunesse, Cadotte, Clément, Simonds, Latulippe, Badeau, Chardonnais, and Janisse. The children and grandchildren of some, perhaps of many of these men, are still living, at various points in the West, and still bear the names of their ancestors. Joseph Clément, for example, probably a son of old man Clément, lives to-day on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, in South Dakota. Nicholas and Antoine Jeunesse, or Janisse, a few years ago were still alive, one at Pine Ridge, the other at Whetstone Agency, in South Dakota. Antoine Janisse died at Pine Ridge in 1897 and his brother Nicholas about 1905.

The expedition started on Friday, June 10, from Cyprian Chouteau's trading-post, near the mouth of the Kansas River, and marched up that stream. Their baggage, instruments and provisions were carried in mule carts, of which they had eight; and the men, except the drivers of these carts, were mounted; and some of them drove loose horses. A few oxen were taken along for food. They marched up the Kansas River, and from

time to time purchased milk, butter, and vegetables at Indian farms, a condition of things which indicates that the Indians at that time were further advanced toward civilization and self-support than many of them seem to be at the present day. It was the practice to encamp an hour or two before sunset, when the carts were arranged so as to form a sort of barricade, or at least to mark the boundaries of a circle about the camp, eighty yards in diameter.

"The tents were pitched and the horses hobbled and turned loose to graze; and but a few minutes elapsed before the cooks of the messes, of which there were four, were busily engaged in preparing the evening meal. . . . When we had reached a part of the country where such a precaution became necessary, the carts being regularly arranged for defending the camp, guard was mounted at eight o'clock, consisting of three men, who were relieved every two hours; the morning watch being horse guard for the day. At daybreak the camp was roused, the animals turned loose to graze, and breakfast generally over between six and seven o'clock, when we resumed our march, making regularly a halt at noon for one or two hours."

During his march up the Kansas River, Fremont speaks of passing a large but deserted Kansas village, "scattered in an open wood along the margin of the stream, on a spot chosen with the customary Indian fondness for beauty of scenery. The Pawnees had attacked it in the early spring. Some of the houses were burnt, and others blackened with smoke, and weeds

were already getting possession of the cleared places." June 17 they crossed the Big Vermillion, and Big Blue; and saw their first antelope; while Carson brought in a fine deer. They were now on the trail of a party of emigrants to Oregon, and found many articles that they had thrown away. Game began to be abundant; there were flocks of turkeys in the bottom of the Little Blue; elk were seen on the hills, and antelope and deer abounded. When they reached the Pawnee country, many were the tales told of the craft and daring of these independent people. One morning they had a genuine Indian alarm; a man who was somewhat behind the party, rode up in haste, shouting, "Indians! Indians!" He stated that he had seen them, and had counted twenty-seven. The command was at once halted, and the usual precautions made for defence, while Carson, mounting one of the hunting horses, set out to learn the cause of the alarm. "Mounted on a fine horse, without a saddle, and scouring bareheaded over the prairie, Kit was one of the finest pictures of a horseman I have ever seen. A short time enabled him to discover that the Indian war party of twenty-seven consisted of six elk who had been gazing curiously at our caravan as it passed, and were now scampering off at full speed. This was our first alarm, and its excitement broke agreeably on the monotony of the day."

The party now crossed over to the Platte River—which Fremont calls the Nebraska—and encamped on its banks. Two days later, while they were halted for noon, there came the startling cry, "*Du monde!*"—

people. In a moment all were prepared for defence. Horses were driven in, hobbled and picketed, and the horsemen were galloping at full speed in the direction of the new-comers, screaming and yelling with the wildest excitement. The travellers proved to be a small party, under the charge of a man named John Lee, which had left Fort Laramie two months before, endeavoring to transport the furs of the American Fur Company down the Platte by boat; they had started with the annual flood, but before they had travelled one hundred and fifty miles found that their waterway had become too shoal for their boats; they had therefore cached their possessions, and had started east on foot, carrying on their backs their provisions, clothing, and a few light furs. It was from among this party that Fremont engaged Latulippe, who, though on his way to St. Louis, really had no special desire to go there, and was quite willing to turn about and face the West again.

The same day three Cheyennes were met, returning from an unsuccessful horse-stealing expedition against the Pawnee village. They joined the party, and for some days afterward travelled in its company. On the 29th the first buffalo were seen, and on the following day these animals swarmed "in immense numbers over the plain, where they had left scarcely a blade of grass standing." "We had heard from a distance a dull and confused murmuring, and when we came in view of their dark masses there was not one among us who did not feel his heart beat quicker. It was the early part of the day, when the herds are feeding, and everywhere

they were in motion. Here and there a huge old bull was rolling in the grass, and clouds of dust rose in the air from various parts of the bands, each the scene of some obstinate fight. Indians and buffalo make the poetry and life of the prairie, and our camp was full of their exhilaration." Here first they feasted on buffalo meat. Fremont says: "At any time of the night might be seen pieces of the most delicate and choicest meat, roasting *en appolas*, on sticks around the fire, and the guard were never without company. With pleasant weather and no enemy to fear, an abundance of the most excellent meat, and no scarcity of bread or tobacco, they were enjoying the oasis of a voyageur's life. Three cows were killed to-day. Kit Carson had shot one, and was continuing the chase in the midst of another herd, when his horse fell headlong, but sprang up and joined the flying band. Though considerably hurt, he had the good fortune to break no bones; and Maxwell, who was mounted on a fleet hunter, captured the runaway after a hard chase. He was on the point of shooting him, to avoid the loss of his bridle (a handsomely mounted Spanish one), when he found that his horse was able to come up with him."

The next day, July 1, Fremont himself made a chase for buffalo. He says: "As we were riding quietly along the bank, a grand herd of buffalo, some seven or eight hundred in number, came crowding up from the river, where they had been to drink, and commenced crossing the plain slowly, eating as they went. The wind was favorable; the coolness of the morning invited to exercise,



the ground was apparently good, and the distance across the prairie (two or three miles) gave us a fine opportunity to charge them before they could get among the river hills. It was too fine a prospect for the chase to be lost; and, halting for a few moments, the hunters were brought up and saddled, and Kit Carson, Maxwell, and I started together. They were now somewhat less than half a mile distant, and we rode easily along until within about three hundred yards, when a sudden agitation, a wavering in the band, and a galloping to and fro of some which were scattered along the skirts gave us the intimation that we were discovered. We started together at a grand gallop, riding steadily abreast of each other, and here the interest of the chase became so engrossingly intense, that we were sensible to nothing else. We were now closing upon them rapidly, and the front of the mass was already in rapid motion for the hills, and in a few seconds the movement had communicated itself to the whole herd.

“A crowd of bulls, as usual, brought up the rear, and every now and then some of them faced about, and then dashed on after the band a short distance, and turned and looked again, as if more than half inclined to stand and fight. In a few moments, however, during which we had been quickening our pace, the rout was universal, and we were going over the ground like a hurricane. When at about thirty yards we gave the usual shout (the hunter's *pas de charge*), and broke into the herd. We entered on the side, the mass giving way in every direction in their heedless course. Many of the bulls,

less active and less fleet than the cows, paying no attention to the ground, and occupied solely with the hunter, were precipitated to the earth with great force, rolling over and over with the violence of the shock, and hardly distinguishable in the dust. We separated on entering, each singling out his game.

“My horse was a trained hunter, famous in the West under the name of Proveau, and, with his eyes flashing, and the foam flying from his mouth, sprang on after the cow like a tiger. In a few moments he brought me alongside of her, and, rising in the stirrups, I fired at the distance of a yard, the ball entering at the termination of the long hair, and passing near the heart. She fell headlong at the report of the gun, and, checking my horse, I looked around for my companions. At a little distance, Kit was on the ground, engaged in tying his horse to the horns of a cow which he was preparing to cut up. Among the scattered bands, at some distance below, I caught a glimpse of Maxwell; and while I was looking, a light wreath of white smoke curled away from his gun, from which I was too far to hear the report. Nearer, and between me and the hills, toward which they were directing their course, was the body of the herd, and, giving my horse the rein, we dashed after them. A thick cloud of dust hung upon their rear, which filled my mouth and eyes, and nearly smothered me. In the midst of this I could see nothing, and the buffalo were not distinguishable until within thirty feet. They crowded together more densely still as I came upon them, and rushed along in such a compact body,

that I could not obtain an entrance—the horse almost leaping upon them. In a few moments the mass divided to the right and left, the horns clattering with a noise heard above everything else, and my horse darted into the opening. Five or six bulls charged on us as we dashed along the line, but were left far behind; and, singling out a cow, I gave her my fire, but struck too high. She gave a tremendous leap, and scoured on swifter than before. I reined up my horse, and the band swept on like a torrent, and left the place quiet and clear. Our chase had led us into dangerous ground. A prairie-dog village, so thickly settled that there were three or four holes in every twenty yards square, occupied the whole bottom for nearly two miles in length. Looking around, I saw only one of the hunters, nearly out of sight, and the long dark line of our caravan crawling along, three or four miles distant.”

Continuing up the Platte River, Fremont reached the junction of the North and South Platte, on the 2d of July. He now divided his forces, sending one party up the North Platte to Fort Laramie, and another up the South Platte to St. Vrain's fort, and thence across country to a meeting point at Fort Laramie. This last party he determined to take charge of himself, taking Mr. Preuss, and four of his best men. The Cheyennes, whose village was supposed to be on the South Platte, also decided to accompany him. The party for the North Fork was to be in charge of Clément Lambert. The separation took place July 5. The party following up the South Platte took one led horse, and a pack-

mule, and travelled very light. The cook had been ordered to prepare provisions for this outfit, and they started. When they stopped for noon, however, they discovered that the provisions they supposed they were carrying, had been left behind, and they had nothing to eat except the meat of a poor bull that they had killed during the day. As the trip promised to be a hard one, Fremont sent two of his men, Preuss and Bernier, across the country to rejoin those who were travelling up the North branch of the river.

Buffalo were abundant, and an incident of the march was a bull fight on a large scale, which the travelers intercepted: "In the course of the afternoon, dust rising among the hills at a particular place, attracted our attention; and riding up, we found a band of eighteen or twenty buffalo bulls engaged in a desperate fight. Though butting and goring were bestowed liberally, and without distinction, yet their efforts were evidently directed against one—a huge gaunt old bull, very lean, while his adversaries were all fat and in good order. He appeared very weak and had already received some wounds, and, while we were looking on, was several times knocked down and badly hurt, and a very few moments would have put an end to him. Of course we took the side of the weaker party, and attacked the herd; but they were so blind with rage, that they fought on, utterly regardless of our presence, although on foot and on horseback we were firing in open view within twenty yards of them. But this did not last long. In a very few seconds, we created a commotion among

them. One or two, which were knocked over by the balls, jumped up and ran off into the hills; and they began to retreat slowly along a broad ravine to the river, fighting furiously as they went. By the time they had reached the bottom, we had pretty well dispersed them, and the old bull hobbled off, to lie down somewhere. One of his enemies remained on the ground where we had first fired upon them, and we stopped there for a short time to cut from him some meat for our supper."

At length they reached the post, and were cordially received by Mr. St. Vrain.

No provisions could be had here, except a little coffee; but the way from here to Fort Laramie was through a country supposed to abound in buffalo, so that there was no danger of starvation. Here Fremont obtained a couple of horses and three mules, and he also hired a Spaniard for his trip, and took with him two others who were going to obtain service on the Laramie River. Crossing various streams, they passed through a pleasant buffalo country, and crossed Lodgepole Creek, and Horse Creek, coming to Goshen's Hole.

The party struck the North Platte thirteen miles below Fort Laramie, and continuing up the stream, they first came in view of Fort Platte, a post belonging to Messrs. Sybille, Adams & Co.; and from there kept on up to Fort John, or Fort Laramie. Mr. Preuss and his party had already reached there, but had been much alarmed by the accounts of Indian hostilities, received from James Bridger and a large party of traders and trappers that he was guiding eastward.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### FREMONT

#### II

**A**T Fort Laramie, Fremont heard much about the hostilities of the Sioux and Cheyennes, who, the year before, had had a severe fight with a party of sixty men, under the command of Mr. Frapp, of St. Louis. The Indians had lost eight or ten men, and the whites half as many, including their leader. This left the Indians in a bad frame of mind, and many of the young men had gone off on a war-path, threatening to kill emigrants, and, in fact, any whites passing through the country. One or two parties had already been saved, through the efforts of Fitzpatrick, of the Broken Hand; but the Indians were clearly in a bad temper. A large village of Sioux was camped here, and Fremont had many savage visitors who were very much interested in him and his curious actions. His astronomical observations and instruments especially excited their awe and admiration; but the chiefs were careful to keep the younger men and the women and children from annoying the astronomer. Here the services of Joseph Bissonette as interpreter were secured,



and the party prepared to start. Before this was done, however, a delegation of chiefs warned Fremont not to go farther. He, however, explained to them that he must obey his orders, and was finally allowed to go at his own risk.

The party proceeded up the North Platte River, and the first night out were joined by Bissonette, the interpreter, and by his Indian wife and a young Sioux sent forward by the chiefs at Fort Laramie, partly as guide and partly to vouch for the explorers in case they should meet with hostile Sioux. Fremont imagined, from Bissonette's long residence in the country, that he was a guide, and followed his advice as to the route to be pursued. He afterward learned that Bissonette had seldom been out of sight of the fort, and his suggestions obliged the party to travel over a very rough road. They met a party of Indians who gave very discouraging accounts of the country ahead, saying that buffalo were scarce, that there was no grass to support the horses, partly because of the excessive drought, and partly on account of the grasshoppers, which were unusually numerous. The next day they killed five or six cows and made dried meat of them. Buffalo continued plenty and they pushed forward, meeting Indians, who again gave them bad accounts of the country ahead, so that Bissonette strongly advised Fremont to turn about. This he declined to do, but told his men what he had heard and left it to each man to say whether he would go on or turn back. Fremont had absolute confidence in a number of the best men, and felt sure that they would stay with



him, and to his great satisfaction all agreed to go forward. Here, however, the interpreter and his Indian left him, and with them Fremont sent back one of his men, who, from the effect of an old wound, was unable to travel on foot and his horse seemed on the point of giving out. The carts were taken to pieces and cached in some willow brush, while everything that could be spared was buried in the ground. Pack-saddles were arranged and from here the animals were to carry their loads, not to haul them. Carson was appointed guide, for the region they were now entering had long been his residence.

Instead of following the emigrant trail, which left the Platte and crossed over to the Sweetwater, Fremont determined to keep on up the Platte until he reached the Sweetwater, thinking that in this way he would find better feed for his animals. The decision proved a wise one. The day after leaving their cache they found abundant grass as well as some buffalo, and although when they passed the ford where the Indian village had crossed the river they found there the skeletons of horses lying all about, they had no trouble in finding grass for their animals.

On August 1 they camped near Independence Rock, an isolated granite rock about six hundred and fifty yards long and forty in height. "Everywhere within six or eight feet of the ground, where the surface is sufficiently smooth, and in some places sixty or eighty feet above," he relates, "the rock is inscribed with the names of travellers. Many a name famous in the history of this

country, and some well known to science, are to be found mixed among those of the traders and of travellers for pleasure and curiosity, and of missionaries among the savages."

It was on August 3 that the party had their first sight of the Wind River Mountains, distant then about seventy miles, and appearing as a low, dark, mountainous region. Soon after this they came to the canyon where the Sweetwater comes out of the mountains, and they followed the river up for some distance, but finally left it and turned up a ravine leading to the high prairie above. For some time they had found fuel very scarce, and had been obliged to burn buffalo chips and sage brush as they did here. The rain, which from time to time had been falling upon them down in the valley, now showed as snow on the white peaks that they had approached, for they were within a short distance of the South Pass, which was the objective point for the expedition. Soon they reached the highest point of the Pass, which Fremont estimates at about seven thousand feet, passed over it and camped on the Little Sandy, a tributary of Green River.

The explorer felt a natural longing to push northward from this point, wishing to cross the heads of the Yellowstone, which he justly supposed arose among the mountains which lay to the north of him, but the party were in no condition to make such a journey; the men were more or less exhausted by the difficulties of past travel, provisions were almost gone, and game was scarce. He, however, built a stout corral and felled timber on the

margin of a lake not far off, where there was abundant food for the animals; and, dividing his party, left some of the men and the weakest animals here, and taking fourteen men with fifteen of the best mules, set out to penetrate farther into the mountains. Travel through the mountains was slow and difficult, but attractive; it was down one steep slope and then up another and then down again. Every hilltop showed some deep and beautiful valley, often occupied by lakes, always showing the course of some pure and rapid mountain torrent. The vegetation was fresh and green, as different as possible from the parched grass and juiceless wormwood through which they had so long been travelling.

At their camp of August 13 the upward way became so steep and rough that it was determined to leave the animals here and to continue the journey on foot. The men carried with them nothing but arms and instruments; and as the day was warm many of them left their coats in camp. They climbed and climbed, finding, as always happens in the mountains, that the distances were much greater than they supposed. At night they were still far from their objective point, and they lay down without anything to eat. The next morning, however, starting early, and of course without food, they got among the snow-fields. The elevation was now great, and several of the men, Fremont among the number, were taken ill and were unable to proceed. From here Basil Lajeunesse, with four men, was sent back to the place where the mules had been left, with instructions to bring on, if possible, four or five animals, with

provisions and blankets. Soon after this Fremont and the remaining men returned to their camp, and that night the men sent back for the animals returned with food and bedding. The next day, encouraged by rest and a couple of hearty meals, they determined once more to essay the peaks. They rode their animals well up on to the mountains, and then turning them loose, again began to climb. Their previous experience stood them in good stead; they climbed slowly, and at last reached the summit of the mountains, presumably the peak now known as Fremont's Peak. From this point the Three Tetons bore north fifty degrees west, and Fremont's elevation he gives as thirteen thousand five hundred and seventy feet. He says, with reasonable pride, "We had climbed the loftiest peak of the Rocky Mountains and looked down upon the snow a thousand feet below, and, standing where never human foot had stood before, felt the exultation of first explorers."

They returned to the camp, where they had left their animals, and travelled rapidly eastward, through South Pass, and down on to the Sweetwater and the Platte. An effort was made to run this river with the india-rubber boat, which for daring and hardihood really deserved success. However, although they ran some distance and passed a number of threatening places, they did not get through. "We pushed off again, but after making a little distance the force of the current became too great for the men on shore, and two of them let go the rope. Lajeunesse, the third man, hung on and was jerked headforemost into the river from a rock about

twelve feet high, and down the boat shot like an arrow. Basil following us in the rapid current and exerting all his strength to keep in mid-channel—his head only seen occasionally like a black spot in the white foam. How far we went I do not exactly know, but we succeeded in turning the boat into an eddy below. '*Cré Dieu,*' said Basil Lajeunesse, as he arrived immediately after us. '*Je crois bien que j'ai nagé un demi mile.*' ('Good Lord! I believe I have swum half a mile.') He had owed his life to his skill as a swimmer, and I determined to take him and the two others on board and trust to skill and fortune to reach the other end in safety. We placed ourselves on our knees and with the short paddles in our hands, the most skilful boatman being at the bow, and again we commenced our rapid descent. We cleared rock after rock and shot past fall after fall, our little boat seeming to play with the cataract. We became flushed with success and familiar with the danger, and, yielding to the excitement of the occasion, broke forth together into a Canadian boat song. Singing, or rather shouting, we dashed along, and were, I believe, in the midst of the chorus when the boat struck a concealed rock immediately at the foot of a fall which whirled her over in an instant. Three of my men could not swim and my first feeling was to assist them and save some of our effects; but a sharp concussion or two convinced me that I had not yet saved myself. A few strokes brought me into an eddy, and I landed on a pile of rocks on the left side. Looking around I saw that Mr. Preuss had gained the shore on the same side, about

twenty yards below, and a little climbing and swimming soon brought him to my side. On the opposite side, against the wall, lay the boat bottom up, and Lambert was in the act of saving Descoteaux, whom he had grasped by the hair, and who could not swim. '*Lache pas,*' said he, as I afterward learned, '*lache pas, cher frère.*' ('Don't let go; don't let go, dear brother.') '*Crains pas,*' was the reply, '*Je m'en vais mourir avant que de te lâcher.*' ('Don't fear, I will die before I let you go.') Such was the reply of courage and generosity in this danger. For a hundred yards below the current was covered with floating books and boxes, bales of blankets and scattered articles of clothing; and so strong and boiling was the stream that even our heavy instruments—which were all in cases—kept on the surface, and the sextant, circle and the long black box of the telescope were in view at once. For a moment I felt somewhat disheartened. All our books—almost every record of the journey—our journals and registers of astronomical and barometrical observations—had been lost in a moment. But it was no time to indulge in regrets, and I immediately set about endeavoring to save something from the wreck. Making ourselves understood as well as possible by signs—for nothing could be heard in the roar of the waters—we commenced our operations. Of everything on board the only article that had been saved was my double-barrelled gun, which Descoteaux had caught and clung to with drowning tenacity. The men continued down the river on the left bank. Mr. Preuss and myself de-



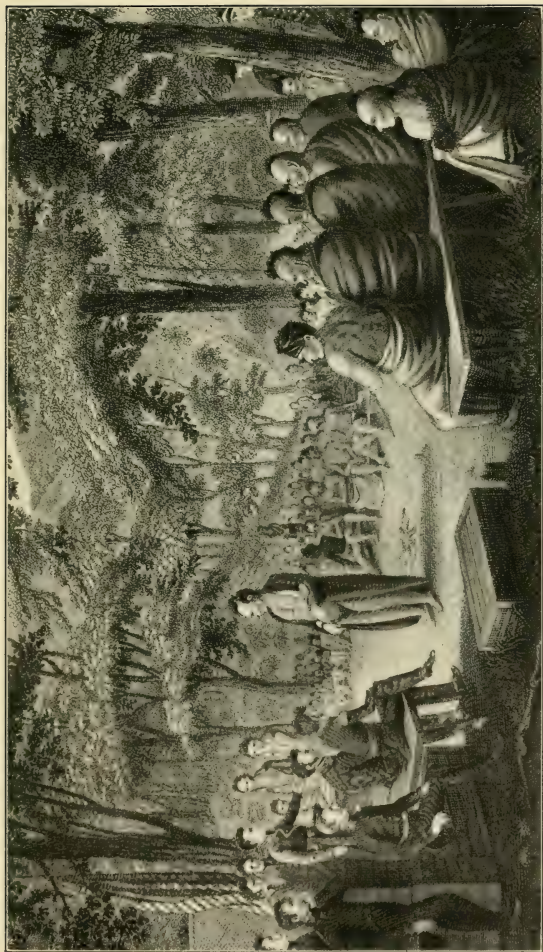
scended on the side we were on, and Lajeunesse, with a paddle in his hand, jumped on the boat alone and continued down the cañon. She was now light and cleared every bad place with much less difficulty. In a short time he was joined by Lambert, and the search was continued for about a mile and a half, which was as far as the boat could proceed in the pass.

“Here the walls were about five hundred feet high, and the fragments of rock from above had choked the river into a hollow pass but one or two feet above the surface. Through this and the interstices of the rock the water found its way. Favored beyond our expectations, all of our registers had been recovered with the exception of one of my journals, which contained the notes and incidents of travel, and topographical descriptions, a number of scattered astronomical observations, principally meridian altitudes of the sun, and our barometrical register west of Laramie. Fortunately, our other journals contained duplicates of the most important barometrical observations which had been taken in the mountains. These, with a few scattered notes were all that had been preserved of our meteorological observations. In addition to these we saved the circle, and these, with a few blankets, constituted everything that had been rescued from the waters.”

Having gathered up the things which they left on the shore, the members of the party, half naked, started on foot for the camp below where the other men had been sent. They reached there that night and found the much-needed food and clothing.



After passing Fort Laramie, Fremont made another effort to navigate the Platte River, trying to descend it in a bull boat; but this descent, instead of being a trip by water, resolved itself into dragging the vessel over the sands and finally abandoning it. On the 22d of September, Fremont reached the village of the Grand Pawnees, about thirty miles above the mouth of the Loup fork, on the Platte River, and on October 1 he found himself at the settlements on the Missouri River. From here the river was descended in a boat and St. Louis was reached October 17.



AN OTO COUNCIL.

From James's *An Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains* by Major Stephen H. Long.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### FREMONT

#### III

FREMONT'S second trip was on a scale somewhat more extensive than his first. His party consisted of thirty-two regular engagees, besides a negro, and two Delaware Indians, who were hired to act as hunters. The route was up the Kansas valley, across the divide, to the head of the Arkansas, and then through passes in the mountains—if any could be found—at the source of this river. The party left “the little town of Kansas”—now Kansas City—the last of May, and proceeded without special adventure until the afternoon of June 6, when a little confusion was caused by the sudden arrival of Maxwell—one of the hunters of the expedition of 1842—just in advance of a party of Osage Indians. Maxwell had gone back to look for a lost horse, and the Osages had promptly chased him into camp, a distance of nine miles. The Osages drove off a number of the best horses, but a hard chase of seven or eight miles recovered them all.

At this season of the year the streams were up, and some difficulty was met with in crossing them. Game

was scarce, for they were travelling through a region frequently traversed by trapping and hunting parties of Indians, and much pursuit had made the game watchful and wild. Travel was so hard and slow, largely owing to rain and mud, that when he reached Big Timber, Fremont determined to divide his party, leaving Fitzpatrick—he of the Broken Hand—with twenty-five men in charge of the provisions and heavier baggage of the camp; while Fremont, more lightly loaded, but taking a wagon and the howitzer which had been furnished by the United States arsenal at St. Louis, should proceed ahead of the main party.

On June 19 they crossed the Pawnee road to the Arkansas, and suddenly came upon the first buffalo, half a dozen bulls, which formed the vanguard of immense herds, among which they journeyed for many days afterward. The 4th of July found them at St. Vrain's fort, on the South Platte.

Their live stock was now much run down, and their stock of provisions fairly exhausted; but they found the fort little better off than themselves, and quite without surplus animals. Fremont, therefore, authorized Maxwell, who was now about to separate from them and to go on to Taos, to purchase there ten or twelve mules, pack them with provisions, and meet him at the mouth of the *Fontaine qui bouit*, on the Arkansas River.

On the 6th of July, ten miles above St. Vrain's fort, the party passed Fort Lancaster, the trading-post of Mr. Lupton. He had already established a farm on the prairie, certainly one of the very earliest in the

Trans-Missouri country. Horses, cattle, and hogs ranged on the prairie; and there was poultry, and what was left of a flourishing garden, which had just been ruined by high water.

The next day a large camp—one hundred and sixty lodges—of Arapahoes was passed. They had many horses and seemed prosperous.

They were now about seven thousand five hundred feet above the sea-level and travelling along prairies from which the waters drained into the Arkansas, Platte, and Kansas rivers. Pike's Peak was in sight, and farther to the south the Spanish Peaks.

The next day they came upon the wagon-road to the settlements on the Arkansas River, and in the afternoon camped on the *Fontaine qui bouit*, which they followed down, passing the camp of a hunter named Maurice, who had been catching buffalo calves, a number of which were seen among the cattle near his lodge. Here, too, were a party of mountaineers, among whom were several Connecticut men belonging to Wyeth's party. On the afternoon of July 14 they camped near a pueblo, or town, where were settled a number of mountaineers who had married Spanish women, and had formed a farming settlement here. Fremont hoped that he might have obtained some provisions from these people, but as trade with the Spanish settlements was forbidden he got nothing except milk, of which they had an abundance. Fremont learned here that the Spanish Utes were on the war-path and that there had been a popular tumult among the civilized Indians near Taos, and so

felt some natural anxiety about the safety of Maxwell. By great good luck, however, he met here Carson, whom he engaged once more, and sent him off to Charles Bent, down the Arkansas River, to buy mules at Bent's fort—Fort William. Usually there was a large stock of animals here, for the Indians, returning from their raids into Mexico, often traded a part of their plunder for goods.

The party now returned to St. Vrain's fort, which they reached on the 23d. Here Fitzpatrick and his party were found safe and well, and also Carson, who had brought with him ten good mules with the necessary pack animals. The provisions which Fitzpatrick had brought and over which he had watched with great care, were very welcome to the hungry explorers. At this post the Delaware Indians determined to return to their home. Fremont made up his mind that he would try the pass through which the *Câche-à-la-Poudre* flowed, and he again divided the party, sending Fitzpatrick across the plains to the mouth of the Laramie River, to follow the usual emigrant trail and to meet him at Fort Hall. Fremont with thirteen men was to take the longer road about. He started up the *Câche-à-la-Poudre*, marched westward through the Medicine Bow Mountains to the North Platte River, which he crossed. The way was not exceptionally difficult except for the fact that it ran through large and tough bushes of sage brush, which made the hauling hard. Buffalo were abundant and food was plenty. Indeed, so many were killed that they spent a day or two in camp drying meat



as provision for the future. While they were occupied at this, they were charged by about seventy mounted Indians, but these were seen by the horse guard, the horses driven into camp and the party took up a defensive position in a grove of timber, so that the Indians, just before the howitzer was fired at them, halted and explained that they had taken the camp for one of hostile Indians. This war-party was one of Arapahoes and Cheyennes, returning unsuccessful from a journey against their enemies, the Shoshoni. They had lost several men and were not in a very pleasant frame of mind.

From here, turning south, the party struck across to the Sweetwater River and at length reached the trail to the Oregon, being thus on the same ground that they had traversed the previous year. Green River, then called Prairie-Hen River, was reached August 16, and something is said of the impressions among the residents in the country about the lower course of the Colorado. Says Fremont: "From many descriptions of trappers it is probable that in its foaming course among its lofty precipices it presents many scenes of wild grandeur; and though offering many temptations, and often discussed, no trappers have been found bold enough to undertake a voyage which has so certain a prospect of a fatal termination. The Indians have strange stories of beautiful valleys abounding with beaver shut up among inaccessible walls of rock in the lower course of the river, and to which the neighboring Indians, in their occasional wars with the Spaniards and among themselves, drive their

herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, leaving them to pasture in perfect security." Fremont was ignorant that nearly eighteen years before Ashley had descended the Green River in a boat, and had inscribed his name and a date on the rock which was seen there by Major J. W. Powell more than forty years later. But Ashley's expedition did not get much farther than the mouth of Ashley River, where it was wrecked and the trip abandoned.

Not long after crossing Green River they passed quite near Bridger's fort, and then sent Carson on to Fort Hall to secure provisions, while Fremont with his party went on to Bear River. Following down this stream they met a party of emigrants, saw more or less game in the way of antelope and elk, and, on approaching the Shoshoni village, were charged by the Indians, who supposed the white men a party of Sioux, because they carried a flag regarded by these people as an emblem of hostility, being usually carried by the Sioux, and the neighboring mountain Indians when they came against the Shoshoni to war. The true character of Fremont's party was recognized by the Indians before they got near them and they were kindly received in the village and obtained provisions there. Further down the stream the celebrated Beer Springs, "which, on account of the effervescing gas and acid taste, have received their name from the voyageurs and trappers of the country, who, in the midst of their rude and hard lives, are fond of finding some fancied resemblance to the luxuries they rarely have the fortune to enjoy." The water of some of these springs is hot, and has a pungent and disagreeable me-

tallic taste leaving a burning effect on the tongue. The Beer, or Soda Springs, are of the same character as the boiling springs at the foot of Pike's Peak, but those are not hot.

It was in the neighborhood of Bear River that Fremont and his party first came in contact with the Indians which he calls Root Diggers, and which in those old times were spoken of as Digger Indians. They are various tribes and bands of Pah-utes, occupying the desert country of the Rocky Mountains, whose subsistence is derived chiefly from roots and seeds, and from such small animals as they capture.

The country which Fremont was crossing had formerly abounded in game, but the buffalo had all disappeared. Even as early as this (1843), attention had been called to the disappearance of the buffalo, and Fremont says: "The extraordinary rapidity with which the buffalo is disappearing from our territories will not appear surprising when we remember the great scale on which their destruction is yearly carried on. With inconsiderable exceptions, the business of the American trading-posts is carried on in their skins; every year the Indian villages make new lodges for which the skin of the buffalo furnishes the material; and in that portion of the country where they are still found, the Indians derive their entire support from them and slaughter them with a thoughtless and abominable extravagance. Like the Indians themselves, they have been a characteristic of the Great West; and as, like them, they are visibly diminishing, it will be interesting to throw a glance

backward through the last twenty years and give some account of their former distribution through the country and the limit of their western range.

“The information is derived principally from Mr. Fitzpatrick, supported by my own personal knowledge and acquaintance with the country. Our knowledge does not go farther back than the spring of 1824, at which time the buffalo were spread in immense numbers over the Green River and Bear River valleys, and through all the country lying between the Colorado, or Green River, of the Gulf of California, and Lewis’ fork of the Columbia River; the meridian of Fort Hall then forming the western limit of their range. The buffalo then remained for many years in that country and frequently moved down the valley of the Columbia on both sides of the river as far as the *Fishing Falls*. Below this point they never descended in any numbers. About the year 1834 or 1835 they began to diminish very rapidly and continued to decrease until 1838 or 1840, when, with the country we have just described, they entirely abandoned all the waters of the Pacific north of Lewis’ fork of the Columbia. At that time the Flathead Indians were in the habit of finding their buffalo on the heads of Salmon River, and other streams of the Columbia; but now they never meet with them farther west than the three forks of the Missouri or the plains of the Yellowstone River.

“In the course of our journey it will be remembered that the buffalo have not so entirely abandoned the waters of the Pacific, in the Rocky Mountain region

South of the Sweetwater, as in the country North of the Great Pass. This partial distribution can only be accounted for in the great pastoral beauty of that country, which bears marks of having long been one of their favorite haunts, and by the fact that the white hunters have more frequented the Northern than the Southern region—it being North of the South Pass that the hunters, trappers and traders have had their rendezvous for many years past; and from that section also the greater portion of the beaver and rich furs were taken, although always the most dangerous as well as the most profitable hunting ground.

“In that region lying between the Green or Colorado River and the head waters of the Rio del Norte, over the *Yampah*, *Kooyah*, *White*, and *Grand* rivers—all of which are the waters of the Colorado—the buffalo never extended so far to the westward as they did on the waters of the Columbia; and only in one or two instances have they been known to descend as far west as the mouth of the White River. In travelling through the country west of the Rocky Mountains, observations readily led me to the impression that the buffalo had, for the first time, crossed that range to the waters of the Pacific only a few years prior to the period we are considering and in this opinion I am sustained by Mr. Fitzpatrick and the older trappers in that country. In the region West of the Rocky Mountains we never meet with any of the ancient vestiges which throughout all the country lying upon their Eastern waters are found in the *great highways*, continuous for hundreds of miles, always several inches and some-

times several feet in depth which the buffalo have made in crossing from one river to another or in traversing the mountain ranges. The Snake Indians, more particularly those low down upon Lewis' fork, have always been very grateful to the American trappers for the great kindness (as they frequently expressed it) which they did to them in driving the buffalo so low down the Columbia River.

"The extraordinary abundance of the buffalo on the east side of the Rocky Mountains and their extraordinary diminution will be made clearly evident from the following statement: At any time between the years 1824 and 1836 a traveller might start from any given point South or North in the Rocky Mountain range, journeying by the most direct route to the Missouri River, and, during the whole distance, his road would be always among large bands of buffalo, which would never be out of his view until he arrived almost within sight of the abodes of civilization.

"At this time the buffalo occupy but a very limited space, principally along the Eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, sometimes extending at their Southern extremity to a considerable distance into the plains between the Platte and Arkansas Rivers and along the Eastern frontier of New Mexico as far South as Texas.

"The following statement, which I owe to the kindness of Mr. Sanford, a partner in the American Fur Company, will further illustrate this subject by extensive knowledge acquired during several years of travel through the region inhabited by the buffalo:



“The total amount of robes annually traded by ourselves and others will not be found to differ much from the following statement:

	ROBES.
American Fur Company. . . . .	70,000
Hudson Bay Company. . . . .	10,000
All other companies, probably. . . . .	10,000
<hr/>	
Making a total of. . . . .	90,000

as an average annual return for the last eight or ten years.

“In the Northwest, the Hudson’s Bay Company purchased from the Indians but a very small number—their only market being Canada, to which the cost of transportation nearly equals the produce of the furs; and it is only within a very recent period that they have received buffalo robes in trade; and out of the great number of buffalo annually killed throughout the extensive regions inhabited by the Camanches and other kindred tribes, no robes whatever are furnished for trade. During only four months of the year (from November until March) the skins are good for dressing; those obtained in the remaining eight months being valueless to traders, and the hides of bulls are never taken off or dressed as robes at any season. Probably not more than one-third of the skins are taken from the animals killed, even when they are in good season, the labor of preparing and dressing the robes being very great, and it is seldom that a lodge trades more than twenty skins in a year. It is during the summer months, and in the early part of autumn that the greatest number of buffalo are killed, and yet



at this time a skin is never taken for the purpose of trade.' . . ."

Fremont's party at this time was on short allowance of food. Word had been sent to Carson to bring from Fort Hall a pack animal loaded with provisions, for there was no game in the country and it was hard to purchase food of any kind from the Indians.

On September 3 Carson rode into camp with provisions sufficient for a few days. The party kept on down Bear River, and on the 6th from the top of a hill saw the Great Salt Lake.

Up to this time this lake had been seen by comparatively few white people; in fact, only by trappers who were wintering through the country in search of beaver and who cared for geography only so far as it helped them on their way. No white man's boat had ever floated on its dense waters, its islands had never been visited, and no one had made a survey of its shores or even passed all around it. Among trappers it was generally believed that while the lake had no visible outlet there was somewhere in it a tremendous whirlpool through which its waters flowed out by a subterranean channel to the ocean.

All these facts and beliefs made Fremont very anxious to visit the lake and survey it; and having with him a rubber boat he had high hopes of what he might accomplish. However, since the party was on short allowance, the provisions which Carson had brought with him being now exhausted, he sent back to Fort Hall seven of his extra men under the charge of François Lajeunesse.

The party was now reduced to eight, five of whom were to make the first voyage of discovery on the Great Salt Lake, while three should remain on the shore as camp keepers. It was only now discovered that the boat was badly put together, and when put in the water and loaded it leaked air in rather a serious way, so that the constant use of the bellows was needed to keep it afloat. Fortunately they had good weather at starting, for the day was very calm; and they reached one of the islands to find the rocks along the water's edge encrusted with salt, and a windrow from ten to twenty feet in breadth, consisting of the larvæ of some small insect which inhabited the water, and had been washed up on the shore. These worms, so called, are the common food of certain tribes of Indians living in the neighborhood of these salt or alkaline lakes. There was little on the island to attract explorers, and in view of the frail nature of their craft, and the danger of storms, they did not stay long, but re-embarking reached the shore at a point quite distant from their camp. Food continued scarce and a day or two later they killed a horse for food.

At Fort Hall a few horses and oxen were purchased, the latter for food, and here Fremont sent back eleven of his men, among them Basil Lajeunesse, a good man whom Fremont was sorry to lose. Leaving Fort Hall September 22 the journey was continued down Snake River.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### FREMONT

#### IV

**K**EEPING on down Snake River, sometimes in its valley, sometimes, to avoid bad travelling, marching back on the hills, the party went on. Before long the Grand Rond was passed; and soon after this they entered the timber, through a part of which they were obliged to cut their way.

When the missionary station, occupied by Dr. Whiteman, was reached, it was found that he was absent on a visit to the Dalles of the Columbia; but here were seen a party of emigrants—men, women, and children—all in good health, and living largely on potatoes, which even then were raised here of good quality and in some quantity.

All the trading-posts in the Oregon country were still controlled by the Hudson's Bay people, but all received Fremont cordially, and helped him on his way. They crossed John Day's river, the Des Chutes, called by Fremont Rivière aux Chutes. At the Dalles was a comfortable settlement: "Two good-looking wooden dwelling houses, and a large school house, with stables, barn and

garden, and large cleared fields between the houses and the river bank, on which were scattered the wooden huts of an Indian village." Here the party again divided, Fremont leaving a part of his people at the Dalles with Carson, while he and Mr. Preuss went on down the river by canoe.

The new mode of travel seemed very delightful to men who had been for months journeying on foot and on horseback over a rough country. It was very pleasant to float along down the broad stream, camping from time to time to build their fires, and cook the fat salmon, and potatoes and coffee, which they had, with bread and sugar—luxuries to which they had long been strangers. It was a motley group, but a contented one. Three Indians assisted in paddling the canoe, while the commander of the expedition, the German, Preuss, the Frenchman, Bernier, and the colored man, Jacob, floated onward to the sea. Fremont's eagerness to reach Fort Vancouver led him to travel during a part of each night; and for the greater part of the voyage they had beautiful weather, made good progress, and enjoyed the wonderful scenery. They were now in sight of the splendid Cascade range, and of the towering peaks of Mount Hood, St. Helens, and, later, Mount Rainier. As they passed on down the river the hills grew lower, and presently, one night, they heard the noise of a sawmill at work on the bank, and camped not far from Fort Vancouver. Here, Dr. McLaughlin, the executive officer of the Hudson's Bay Company for the territory West of the Rocky Mountains, received the travellers with that courtesy and

hospitality for which he was so well known, and concerning which all those who passed through the region in early days spoke with so much gratitude.

About the fort were many American emigrants, some of them in a more or less destitute condition, but all of them supplied with the necessities of life by the kindly Hudson's Bay officer, who allowed them to pay for what they had by their labor.

From Dr. McLaughlin Fremont procured three months' provisions, and through his kindness was enabled also to secure men and boats to transport these provisions up the river to the camp of his main party at the Dalles. The return journey was slow with the laden boats, for they were obliged to cordelle the Mackinaw along the shore, being unable to overcome the swift water by their oars.

From the Dalles it was Fremont's purpose to go South, on the West side of the Cascade range, as far as Klamath Lake—by Fremont written Tlamath Lake; thence south to the reputed Buenaventura River, which is said to empty into San Francisco Bay; thence across the desert to the Rocky Mountains, opposite the headwaters of the Arkansas River, and there, crossing the mountains, to follow down the Arkansas to Bent's Fort, and so back to St. Louis. Much of this region had never been passed over by a surveyor. To make this trip at the beginning of winter, the party consisted of twenty-five men, with one hundred and four mules and horses, and a few California cattle, to be driven along as food for the company.

After leaving the Dalles, Fremont's whole party were occupied in making the necessary preparations for the start into this new region. Horses were purchased, provisions accumulated, all unnecessary baggage cut out and left behind, and the little wagon which had hitherto carried the instruments given to the mission. The howitzer, however, was to be taken with them. Here a Chinook Indian, nineteen years old, who had expressed a desire to see the whites, was permitted to join the party.

They started November 25 and followed along the plateau on the east flanks of the Cascade range, and so on the western side of the Fall River. The weather was cold and the streams frozen along the edges, while snow lay on the ground. When the sky cleared superb views were had of Mounts St. Helens, Hood, Rainier, Jefferson and other mountains of what is now called the Presidential range. The weather grew colder and the road more rough, it being over volcanic plains, often interrupted by deep gulches or stream valleys. They were now passing through the country of the Nez Percé, the Cayuse, and certain tribes of Diggers, and from their Indian guides heard more or less alarming accounts of the fierceness and treachery of the Indians before them. December 10 they reached Klamath Lake and saw smoke arising from different points about it. Here, for the purpose of encouraging their guides, who evidently felt very shaky about the local Indians, and alarming the latter, Fremont caused the howitzer to be fired with a shell, and tells that "the bursting of the

shell at a distance, which was something like a second fire of the gun, amazed and bewildered them with delight. It inspired them (the guides) with triumphant feelings, but on the camps at a distance the effect was different, for the smokes in the lake and on the shores immediately disappeared."

The next day Fremont set out to look up the Indians, and before long came near to a village from which two people were seen advancing to meet them.

"We were surprised, on riding up, to find one of them a woman, having never before known a squaw to take any part in the business of war. They were the village chief and his wife, who, in excitement and alarm at the unusual event and appearance, had come out to meet their fate together. The chief was a very prepossessing Indian, with very handsome features, and a singularly soft and agreeable voice—so remarkable as to attract general notice.

"The huts were grouped together on the bank of the river, which, from being spread out in a shallow marsh at the upper end of the lake, was collected here into a single stream. They were large, round huts, perhaps twenty feet in diameter, with rounded tops, on which was the door by which they descended into the interior. Within, they were supported by posts and beams.

"Almost like plants these people seemed to have adapted themselves to the soil, and to be growing on what the immediate locality afforded. Their only subsistence at this time appeared to be a small fish, great quantities of which, that had been smoked and dried,



were suspended on strings about the lodge. Heaps of straw were lying around, and their residence in the midst of grass and rushes had taught them a peculiar skill in converting this material to useful purposes. Their shoes were made of straw or grass, which seemed well adapted for a snowy country, and the women wore on their heads a closely woven basket, which made a very good cap. Among other things were parti-colored mats about four feet square, which we purchased to lay on the snow under our blankets and to use for table-cloths.

“Numbers of singular-looking dogs, resembling wolves, were sitting on the tops of the huts, and of these we purchased a young one, which, after its birthplace, was named Tlamath. The language spoken by these Indians is different from that of the Shoshone and Columbia River tribes, and otherwise than by signs they cannot understand each other. They made us comprehend that they were at war with the people who lived to the southward and to the eastward, but I could obtain from them no certain information. The river on which they live enters the Cascade Mountains on the western side of the lake, and breaks through them by a passage impracticable for travellers, but over the mountains to the northward are passes which present no other obstacle than in the almost impenetrable forests. Unlike any Indians we had previously seen these wore shells in their noses. We returned to our camp, after remaining here an hour or two, accompanied by a number of Indians.”

Like many other persons since that time, Fremont

was much impressed by the attractions of Klamath Lake, and he stopped here a short time to rest his animals. From this point on there were no maps, and practically nothing could be learned of the country from the Indians, although they drew rough maps in the effort to direct the explorers. The road before them was hard and difficult, much of it through heavy forest, made hard to travel by fallen trees, and by snow, which was constantly growing deeper. After two or three very laborious and most uncertain days, they came suddenly to the edge of a precipice, from which they could look over into a green and sunshiny valley below, partly filled by a great lake, which, from its appearance, Fremont called Summer Lake. It stands so on the map to-day. The descent from the mountain was a difficult one, but at last a way was found. It was impossible, however, to reach the shores of the lake, on account of the deep mud. However, streams of good water were passed at sufficient intervals. They had now left the forest behind them, and their fuel consisted of willow twigs and sage brush. A little farther along another lake was approached, called Lake Abert, after Colonel Abert, then the Chief of Engineers. The water of this lake, however, was very bad. Everywhere about this lake were signs of Digger Indians, and about this time they came upon a broad trail over which horses had passed. Most of the country was sterile, and as they crossed the mountains, from the watershed of these lakes, they found snow a foot deep.

## CHAPTER XXX

### FREMONT

#### V

NEW-YEAR'S DAY found them travelling through the desert, over a rough, sandy road. The next day they reached a field of hot springs, the vapor from which was visible a long way off. Fremont was growing uneasy. He had very little idea where he was. There appeared to be no game in the country, except hares, though occasional signs were seen of sheep and antelope. His animals had begun to die, and he felt the necessity of proceeding with great caution. Because of the uncertainty of water for his animals, he formed the plan of exploring the country in advance each day, and leaving the main party behind. On January 10, a beautiful lake, some twenty miles broad, was seen from the top of a ridge, and they proceeded toward it. On the way herds of mountain-sheep were seen on the hills. When they came on a little stream about a mile from the margin of the lake, they found a broad Indian trail following the shores of the lake to the southward. This was followed for a short distance, and then ascended a precipice, against which the water dashed below, and it

was very difficult to get the howitzer along this trail. Mountain-sheep in numbers, and ducks, and some fish were seen, and the party passed the pyramid which rises out of the lake and gives it its name. The last of the cattle driven from the Dalles was killed here for food. On January 15 a few Indians made their appearance about the camp, and one of them was persuaded to come into it. It was difficult to communicate with him; but from what he said, it was inferred that at the end of the lake was a river, which subsequent investigation showed ran into the lake, which has no outlet. Here, to the great delight of the white men, the Indians brought in fish to trade. Fremont calls them salmon trout, and says that they were from two to four feet in length. They appeared to form the chief food of these Indians, who, Fremont says, hold the fishery in exclusive possession, and who are different from the "Digger" Indians so frequently spoken of in crossing the desert. It appeared that these Indians were in communication either with the whites or with other Indians knowing the whites, for they possessed articles of civilized manufacture.

The party now followed up the stream running into Pyramid Lake, travelling along toward the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They were on an Indian trail, and hoped soon to find the Buenaventura River, for which they had been looking. Columns of smoke rising over the country at intervals made them sure that the Indians were notifying each other that strangers had come into the country. Their animals were growing thin

and weak; their feet were much worn away by the rocks, and many of them were lame. Fremont decided, therefore, that he must abandon his course to the eastward and must cross the mountains into the valley of the Sacramento River as soon as possible.

Keeping on southward along the mountains, they crossed streams issuing from them which tempted them to try for a pass; but the heavy snows which appeared to lie on the mountains induced the leader to keep on farther southward. January 24 an Indian came into the camp and offered the strangers a little bag of pine nuts, which they purchased from him. They also gave him some presents; and as nearly as they could understand his signs he promised to conduct them to the opening of a pass of which he knew. From here on they constantly saw Indians, all of whom traded pine nuts to them, and all were armed with bows and stone-pointed arrows. The level of the country appeared to be growing higher, and the snow grew deeper. They put one of their guides on a horse, but he was evidently unacquainted with the animal, and did not even know how to guide it. Soon they entered the range, and having left the desert country, found a country well timbered, and which appeared to produce considerable game. They climbed to the head of the stream, passed over a ridge, and saw from the summit a sunlit country where there was evidently grass. Here the Indians were wearing snowshoes, and accompanied the party, running around them, and swiftly and easily travelling over the snow. They appeared to have no idea of the

power of fire-arms, and thought themselves perfectly safe so long as they kept out of arm's reach.

Descending on the head of this next stream, Fremont learned, before he had gone very far, that this was merely the head of another stream running eastward into the Great Basin, and that they still had to cross a great ridge before they could reach Pacific waters.

The Indians here had heard of a party of twelve white men who, two years before, had ascended the river and crossed to the other side; but this was done when it was summer-time and there was little or no snow to oppose the passage; and at present the Indians declared it could not be done. Nevertheless, they agreed to furnish a guide to take the whites as far as possible. Provisions were now getting low, and consisted chiefly of pease, a little flour, some coffee, and a quantity of sugar. It was on this day, January 29, that the howitzer, which had been dragged so far, was finally abandoned. On January 31 they continued to climb the mountains among the snow. Indians kept visiting them in greater and greater numbers, and from all were heard most discouraging accounts of the possibility of crossing the range. An old man told them that if they could break through the snow, at the end of three days they would come upon grass, which would be about six inches high; and here Fremont decided to attempt the passage and to try to reach Sutter's ranch on the Sacramento. Preparations were made, therefore, to face the cold of the heights, and clothing was repaired and put in order, and a new guide was engaged, who was also fitted out with



spécial reference to the hardships likely to be met with. A dog that had been with them for some little time was killed, and this, with a few rabbits purchased from the Indians, gave the party a strengthening meal.

When they started, the snow soon became so deep that it was absolutely necessary that a road should be broken for the animals. This was done in systematic fashion, and for several days they advanced by very short marches, but without meeting any obstacles greater than the depth of the snow. Sometimes the lack of feed at the end of the day's march would render it necessary to send back the animals to feed at some point on the trail just passed over, where there was good pasture. Two or three days of this hard work was very discouraging. However, Fremont's energy never faltered. He and Carson and Fitzpatrick, on snowshoes, went ahead, reconnoitring in all directions and trying to pick out a good road, and on February 6 they reached a peak from which they saw the valley of the Sacramento; and Carson recognized various natural features which he had not seen for fifteen years.

The difficulties of travel for the horses was so great, and the hillsides so steep, that many of the animals found the greatest difficulty in getting along themselves and could not carry their loads. Sledges were made, therefore, on which the men drew the baggage over the snow; but of course this made progress very slow indeed. The hunters went out to look for game, but found none.

It was on February 20 that they camped with the animals that were left, and with all the material of the



camp, on the summit of a pass in the dividing ridge, about a thousand miles from the Dalles, whence they had started. The prospects of the descent were not promising. Before them were rough mountains, among which lay deep fields of snow; but shortly after they started on their way, they heard the roll of thunder, and looking toward the valley saw a thunder-storm in progress. As the sky cleared, they could see a shining line of water leading toward another broader and larger sheet; and in these they recognized the Sacramento River and the bay of San Francisco. Yet so frequent had been their disappointments during their wanderings through the rough mountains that they hardly dared to believe that they were at last to penetrate the warm, pleasing country where they should be free from the hardships and exposure of the last few months. This night they killed a mule for food, and again the next night. February 23 was their hardest day, for they were forced to travel along steep and slippery mountainsides, where moisture, snow, and ice, together with the tough evergreens of the mountain, made walking difficult and wearisome; but on this night a storm showered upon them rain and not snow. The men, exhausted by the labor of travel and by the lack of food, were beginning to lose strength and courage.

However, now they were constantly descending. The thermometer was just about freezing, and they had left the Sierras behind. The green grass was beginning to make its appearance. The river was descending rapidly, and growing larger. Soon they came to decidu-

ous trees and a warmer atmosphere. The country was covered with growing plants, and the voices of singing birds were heard in the summer air. They were still killing the horses for food.

Fremont now believed that the main difficulties of the road were over, and leaving Fitzpatrick to follow slowly with the main camp, he started ahead with a party of eight, intending to reach Mr. Sutter's house as soon as possible, and to return with provisions and fresh animals for the party. Fitzpatrick was left in command of the others, with instructions to bring on the animals slowly, for all were very weak.

But they were not yet out of their troubles. For much of the way the river ran through narrow canyons, and the travellers were obliged to clamber along the mountain side, over a road rough and almost impassable for their enfeebled live-stock. However, at their camps they found grass. As they went on they were obliged to leave their animals behind, and Fremont left his favorite horse, Proveau, which could no longer keep up. One of the men started back to bring the horse, but did not return until the second day, when it was apparent that his mind was deranged. This day Mr. Preuss, who had gone ahead, did not appear at night, and his absence caused much anxiety. The next day they met some Indians, and kept on down the river, still continuing their search for the lost man. They came upon tracks of Indians, little piles of mussel shells and old fires where they had cooked. On March 4 they came on an Indian village, where they found houses, and near each one a

store-house of acorns, In the houses were basketfuls of roasted acorns, and although the Indians had fled, the travellers supplied themselves with this food, leaving various small articles in payment. In a village not far below three Indian women were captured. They were much frightened, but, encouraged by good treatment, offered food. This night Mr. Preuss came in, very weak from starvation, but not otherwise in bad condition. He had subsisted on roots, ants, frogs, and had received some acorns from Indians whom he met.

At the next village Indians were found wearing shirts of civilized manufacture, and then they came to another and larger village, where the people were dressed more or less in European clothing. Here was a man who could speak Spanish, a vaquero in the service of Captain Sutter, whose fort was but a short distance away. At the fort Fremont was met by Captain Sutter, who gave him a cordial reception, and a night of enjoyment of all the luxuries that he had so long been without. The next day, with fresh horses and provisions, Fremont hurried back to meet Fitzpatrick, and brought in the rest of the party. The second division had had a hard time, having lost many animals; so that of the sixty-seven horses and mules with which they started to cross the Sierras, only thirty-three reached the valley of the Sacramento. The beef, the bread, and the salmon, which Fremont brought, put heart into the starving men, and before long they had reached a permanent camp not far from Sutter's fort.

Captain Sutter had come to California from the west-

ern part of Missouri in 1838-39, and had settled in the Sacramento valley on a large grant of land received from the Mexican Government. Though he had at first had some trouble with the Indians, he succeeded, by his judicious treatment, in converting them into a peaceable and industrious people. They did practically all the work of the ranch, and were paid in shirts, blankets, and articles of clothing. The soil was fertile, and its yield ample. Cattle and horses were abundant. He had a number of mechanics, who made whatever he needed.

The blacksmith of Fremont's party, desiring to remain in California, was here discharged, as were also four others of the party. Derosier, one of the best men in the outfit, the one who a few days before had gone back after Fremont's horse, wandered away from the camp and never returned.

On March 24 the party having recovered from the suffering endured in crossing the mountains, and being now once more strong, set out to continue their journey. An ample stock of provisions had been secured, and a fresh supply of animals, consisting of one hundred and thirty horses and mules, and about thirty head of cattle, were also secured. An Indian herder was furnished by Captain Sutter to look after the stock, a great part of which was absolutely wild. From this point it was purposed to go south, up the valley of the San Joaquin, to a pass at its head. Thence they were to move southwardly to reach the Spanish trail, which led to Santa Fé. Their southward journey was delightful. Fre-

mont speaks in terms of enthusiasm of the flowers they met with, of the beautiful groves of oaks, the songs of the birds, the sweet odors that perfumed the air. Elk and antelope were in great abundance, and the wild horses were so numerous that the travellers feared for the safety of the wild stock they were driving with them. On April 7 they crossed the divide between the headwaters of the San Joaquin and the Tulé Lakes. The passage brought with it more or less change in climate and a distinct change in surroundings. Indians were met with constantly, and most of them seemed well disposed. As they lowered their altitude, after passing over the divide, the way became more rough, though the feed for the animals was still good.

Fortunately Fremont's party was ahead of the annual Santa Fé caravans, which insured them good grass at the camping places. They had not gone far before they met parties of Mohave Indians, who seemed friendly enough; but on the day following, two Spaniards, a man and a lad, came into camp telling of their party of six having been attacked by Indians, about eighty miles beyond the encampment. They had with them about thirty horses, and were suddenly attacked by a party of Indians, who had previously been in camp and seemed friendly. The horse guards—the two who had just come into Fremont's camp—drove their animals through the attacking party and escaped with their horses, which they had left about twenty miles behind on coming to Fremont's camp. When the white men came to the place where the horses had been left, it appeared

that the animals had been driven off by Indians. Carson and Godey with the Mexican Fuentes started after them; but in the evening the Mexican returned, his horse having given out.

“In the afternoon of the next day a warwhoop was heard, such as Indians make when returning from a victorious enterprise, and soon Carson and Godey appeared, driving before them a band of horses, recognized by Fuentes to be part of those they had lost. Two bloody scalps, dangling from the end of Godey’s gun, announced that they had overtaken the Indians as well as the horses. They informed us that after Fuentes left them, from the failure of his horse, they continued the pursuit alone, and toward nightfall entered the mountains, into which the trail led. After sunset the moon gave light, and they followed the trail by moonshine until late in the night, when it entered a narrow defile and was difficult to follow. Afraid of losing it in the darkness of the defile, they tied up their horses, struck no fire, and lay down to sleep in silence and in darkness. Here they lay from midnight till morning. At daylight they resumed the pursuit, and about sunrise discovered the horses, and immediately dismounting and tying up their own, they crept cautiously to a rising ground which intervened, from the crest of which they perceived the encampment of four lodges close by. They proceeded quietly, and had got within thirty or forty yards of their object when a movement among the horses disclosed them to the Indians. Giving the war shout, they instantly charged into the camp, regardless



of the number which the four lodges would imply. The Indians received them with a flight of arrows shot from their long bows, one of which passed through Godey's shirt collar, barely missing the neck. Our men fired their rifles upon a steady aim, and rushed in. Two Indians were stretched on the ground, fatally pierced with bullets; the rest fled, except a lad that was captured. The scalps of the fallen were instantly stripped off; but in the process, one of them, who had two balls through his body, sprung to his feet, the blood streaming from his skinned head, and uttering a hideous howl. An old squaw, possibly his mother, stopped and looked back from the mountain-side she was climbing, threatening and lamenting. The frightful spectacle appalled the stout hearts of our men; but they did what humanity required, and quickly terminated the agonies of the gory savage. They were now masters of the camp, which was a pretty little recess in the mountain, with a fine spring, and apparently safe from all invasion. Great preparations had been made to feast a large party, for it was a very proper place for a rendezvous, and for the celebration of such orgies as robbers of the desert would delight in. Several of the best horses had been killed, skinned and cut up, for the Indians, living in mountains and only coming into the plains to rob and murder, make no other use of horses than to eat them. Large earthen vessels were on the fire, boiling and stewing the horse beef, and several baskets containing fifty or sixty pairs of moccasins indicated the presence or expectation of a considerable party. They released the boy, who



had given strong evidence of the stoicism or something else of the savage character, by commencing his breakfast upon a horse's head as soon as he found he was not to be killed, but only tied as a prisoner. Their object accomplished, our men gathered up all the surviving horses, fifteen in number, returned upon their trail, and rejoined us at our camp in the afternoon of the same day. They rode about one hundred miles in the pursuit and return, and all in thirty hours. The time, place, object and numbers considered, this expedition of Carson and Godey may be considered among the boldest and most disinterested which the annals of western adventure, so full of daring deeds, can present. Two men, in a savage desert, pursue day and night an unknown body of Indians into the defiles of an unknown mountain, attack them on sight without counting numbers, and defeat them in an instant—and for what? To punish the robbers of the desert, and to avenge the wrongs of Mexicans whom they did not know. I repeat, it was Carson and Godey who did this—the former an American, born in the Boonslick county of Missouri; the latter a Frenchman, born in St. Louis—and both trained to western enterprise from early life.”

A little later the party came to the place where the Mexicans had been attacked. There were found the two men of the party, both killed by arrows; but of the women there was no trace, they having evidently been carried away. Journeying onward, making short marches, and some that were very long, they kept on

along the Spanish trail. May 4—the longest journey of all, between fifty and sixty miles without any water—the skeletons of horses were constantly seen along the trail. “Hourly expecting to find water, we continued to press on, until toward midnight, when, after a hard and uninterrupted march of sixteen hours, our wild mules began running ahead, and in a mile or two we came to a bold running stream—so keen is the sense of that animal, in these desert regions, in scenting at a distance this necessary of life.”

The next day was spent in camp, that the animals might rest and feed. Indians were about them constantly, and apparently tried to steal their horses. They were very bold and insolent, but the whites bore it all, being unwilling to be drawn into a fight. These were the same people who had murdered the Mexicans; they were barefooted and nearly naked; the men were armed with bows and arrows, each carrying a quiver of thirty or forty shafts. The arrow-heads were made of clear, translucent stone, and Fremont says, “Shot from their long bows are almost as effective as a gun shot.” A chief came into camp, and declared his confidence in himself and his people, and his belief that they could destroy the white men, merely on the ground that they were many while the whites were few. The Indians were seen hunting lizards, which they dragged from a hole by means of a long stick hooked at the end. The next day they followed the party, and promptly picked up every animal that was left behind to rest and feed. That night one of the best men, Tabeau, was killed by

an Indian, having been shot with arrows not far from the camp. These Indians did not appear after this day. A day or two later the party met Joe Walker, the trapper, who now became guide for the expedition. With him were eight Americans, who, having started with the Spanish caravan, had heard that a party of white men were ahead, and had left the caravan and overtaken the explorers. On the way they had an encounter with the Diggers that had troubled Fremont, and killed two of them.

May 23, they reached Sevier River, a tributary of the lake of the same name. Here they were obliged to ferry themselves across in boats made of bundles of rushes tied together and bound to poles. Here, too, Badeau, a good man, was killed by accident; he dragged toward him a gun by the muzzle and the gun was discharged. Not far beyond they reached Utah Lake, which Fremont imagined to be the southern end of Great Salt Lake. He was much puzzled, however, that the northern end of the lake should be a saturated solution of salt, while the southern end was fresh. It does not appear to have occurred to him that these were two different bodies of water.

Having crossed the mountains to the valley of White River, he reached, on the 3d of June, what he calls the winter fort, a trading post belonging to Mr. A. Roubideau, on the principal fork of the Uintah River. On the 7th, they found themselves on the verge of Brown's Hole, a name well known to all old-timers in the West, and thirty years ago one of the greatest game countries

in the world. Here mountain-sheep were found, and some killed. Two or three days later, buffalo were killed; and we may imagine the delight with which the travellers found themselves once more back on the range where fat cow was to be had. From here they went north into the Three Parks, travelling in pleasant weather through a country well watered, where grass and wood were to be had, and where buffalo, antelope, and elk were hardly ever out of sight. On June 14, they were in New Park, now called North Park, going southward up the Platte River. They soon came upon parties of Arapahoes and Sioux, and the camp was full of Indians. On June 22 they crossed the mountains and found themselves on the headwaters of the Arkansas. A day or two later they were present at a fight which took place between Utes and Arapahoes. The Ute women urged the white men to take part in the fight; but they felt that it was no concern of theirs, and were quite uneasy lest they themselves should be attacked. They kept travelling, and before night had put fifteen miles between themselves and the Indian village, and fortified themselves. They were now travelling rapidly down the Arkansas, meeting Indians constantly. Among these were a large village of Pawnees, who received the white men "with unfriendly rudeness and characteristic insolence which they never fail to display whenever they find an occasion for doing so with impunity." The Pawnees, indeed, seem always subject to the animadversion of the early traveller.

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The party journeyed down the Arkansas for nearly three hundred miles, and on the last day of July, 1844, reached the little town of Kansas, on the Missouri. Fremont's second journey was over.



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